

# **FEI DRESSAGE JUDGING MANUAL**

**To be considered in connection with the FEI Dressage Rules and the FEI Dressage Handbook Guidelines for Judging.**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

OBJECT, GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF DRESSAGE. ....	3
MARKING OF FUNDAMENTAL MISTAKES IN DRESSAGE MOVEMENTS .....	24
DIRECTIVES FOR JUDGES - FEI FREESTYLE TESTS.....	41
MARKING OF OMISSIONS AND INCORRECT EXECUTION IN FREESTYLE TESTS .....	47
ASSESSING THE DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY IN A FREESTYLE TEST .....	53
DRESSAGE COMPETITIONS FOR CHILDREN .....	54
JUDGING THE "QUALITY OF RIDING" MARK IN CHILDREN COMPETITIONS.....	57
COMPETITIONS FOR 5-, 6- AND 7-YEAR-OLD HORSES.....	63

## **OBJECT, GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF DRESSAGE.**

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, balanced, loose and flexible, but also confident, attentive and keen, thus achieving perfect understanding with the Athlete.

These qualities are demonstrated by:

- The freedom and regularity of the paces.
- The harmony, lightness and ease of the movements.
- The lightness of the forehand and the engagement of the hindquarters, originating from a lively impulsion transmitted through a supple back.
- The acceptance of the bit, with submissiveness/throughness (Durchlässigkeit) without any tension or resistance (e.g. open mouth or swishing tail).

2. 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 Athlete, remaining absolutely straight in any movement on a straight line and bending accordingly when moving on curved lines.

3. **The regularity of the paces is fundamental to Dressage.**

The walk and the trot are regular, supple and free. The canter is united, light, uphill, balanced and equal on both reins. The hindquarters are never inactive or sluggish. The Horse responds to the slightest indication of the Athlete and thereby gives life and spirit to all the rest of its body.

4. By virtue of a lively impulsion and the suppleness of the joints, free from the paralysing 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.
5. In all the work, even at the halt, the Horse must be in front of the Athlete’s aids, “on the bit”, but it also has to accept 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 to the extension or collection of the pace, and when it accepts the bridle with a light and consistent soft submissive contact, thereby chewing the bit with a quiet, sensitive mouth. The head should remain in a steady position, as a rule with the nose line 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 Athlete.
6. Cadence is shown in trot and canter. It is the proof of well-developed impulsion and the ability to carry weight that enables a Horse to move with proper harmony, well-marked regularity and balance. Cadence must be maintained in all the different trot or canter exercises.
7. In a movement which must be carried out at a certain point of the arena, it should be done at the moment when the Athlete's body is above this point, except in transitions where the Horse approaches the letter from a diagonal or perpendicular to the point where the letters are positioned. In this case, the transitions must be done when the Horse’s nose reaches the track at the letter so that the Horse is straight in the transition. This includes the execution of flying changes.

## **BASIC PACES OF THE HORSE.**

### **THE WALK:**

The walk is a marching pace in a regular and well-marked four (4) time beat with eight (8) different phases. This regularity combined with full relaxation must be maintained throughout all walk movements.

There is no moment of suspension.

When the foreleg and the hind leg on the same side are moved forwards and set down at the same time (or almost at the same time) will this lead to a serious deterioration of the pace. The walk tends to become an almost lateral movement, so called "pacing" or "ambling".

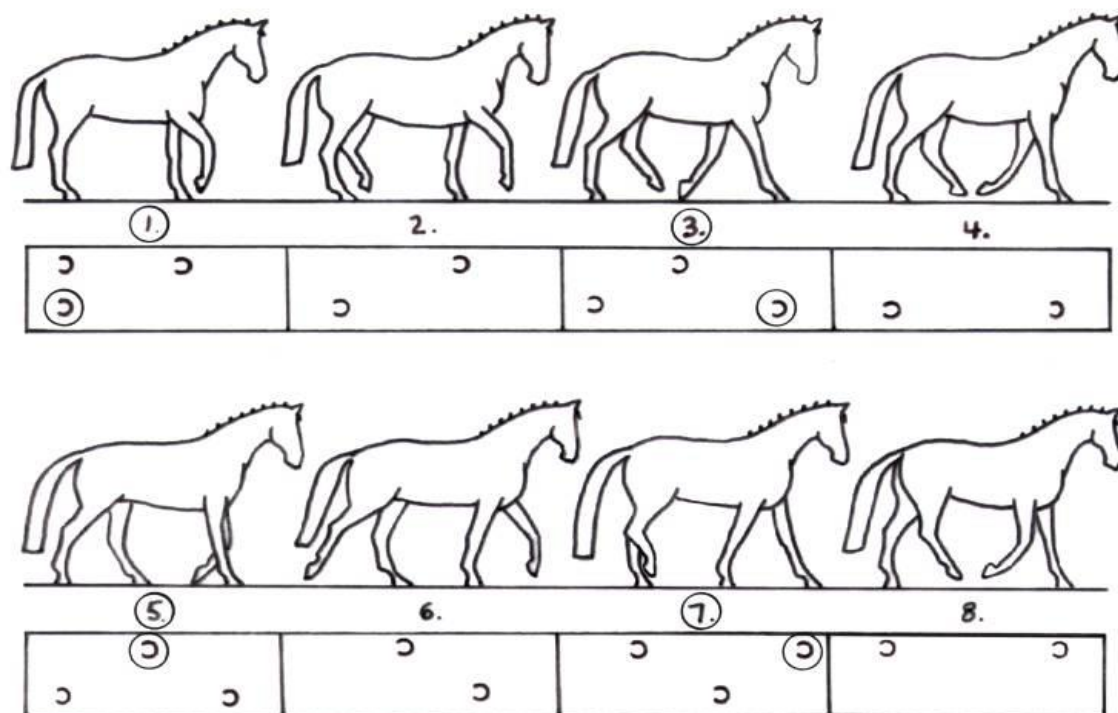
The following walk tempi are recognised: **Collected walk, Medium walk, Extended walk, and Free walk.** There should always be a clear difference in the attitude and overtracking in these variations.

**Collected walk.** The Horse remains "on the bit", moves resolutely forward, with its neck raised and arched and showing a clear self-carriage. The head approaches the vertical position and a light contact is maintained with the mouth. The hind legs are active and engaged with good hock action. The pace should remain marching and vigorous, the feet being placed in regular sequence. The steps are shorter, higher and more active than in medium walk, because all joints bend more markedly. Ideally, the hind feet do not track over the footprints of the forefeet.

**Medium walk.** A clear, regular walk of moderate lengthening. The Horse, remaining "on the bit", walks energetically but relaxed with even and determined steps, the hind feet touching the ground in front of the hoof prints of the forefeet. The Athlete maintains a light, soft and steady contact with the mouth, allowing the natural movement of the Horse's head and neck.

**Extended walk.** The Horse, showing utmost freedom of shoulders, covers as much ground as possible, without haste and without losing the regularity of the steps. The hind feet touch the ground clearly in front of the hoof prints of the forefeet. The Athlete allows the Horse to stretch out head and neck (forwards and downwards) without losing contact with the mouth and control of the poll. The nose must be clearly in front of the vertical.

**Free Walk.** The free walk is a pace of relaxation in which the Horse is allowed complete freedom to lower and stretch out head and neck. The degree of ground cover and length of steps, with the hind feet stepping clearly in front of the footprints of the front feet, are essential to the quality of the free walk.



The walk is a pace in four (4)-beat rhythm with eight (8) phases.

(Numbers in circles indicate the beat).

## **THE TROT:**

The trot is a two (2)-beat pace of alternate diagonal legs (left fore and right hind leg and vice versa) in four (4) different phases, separated by a moment of suspension.

The quality of the trot is judged by general impression, i.e. the regularity and elasticity of the steps, the cadence and impulsion in collection as well as groundcover and impulsion in extension. This quality originates from a supple back and well-engaged hindquarters, and from the ability to carry and maintain the same rhythm and natural balance in all variations of the trot.

The trot, always with free, active and regular steps, should be moved into without hesitation or haste.

The following trot tempi are recognised: Collected trot, Working trot, Lengthening of steps, Medium trot, and Extended trot.

**Collected trot.** The Horse, remaining "on the bit", moves forward with the neck raised and arched. The hocks, being well-engaged and flexed, must maintain an energetic impulsion, enabling the shoulders to move with greater mobility, thus demonstrating complete self-carriage and elevation. Although the Horse's steps are shorter than in the other trots, rhythm, elasticity and cadence are not lessened.

**Working trot.** This is a pace between the collected and the medium trot, in which the training of the Horse is not yet developed enough and ready for collected movements. The Horse shows proper balance and, remaining "on the bit", goes forward with even, elastic steps, well-

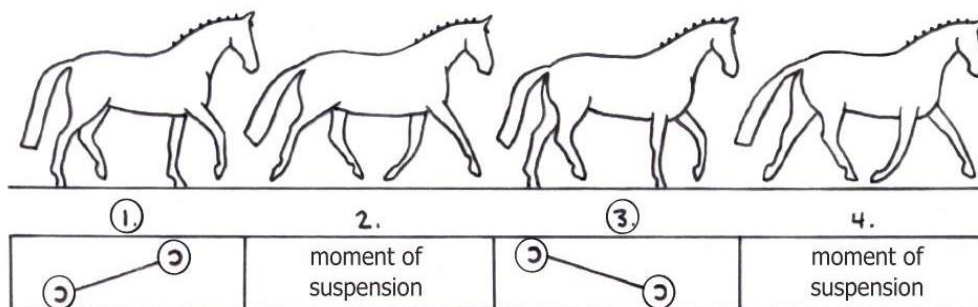
activated hind legs, good hock action and a supple, swinging back. The expression "good hock action" underlines the importance of an impulsion originating from the activity of the hindquarters.

**Lengthening of steps.** In the test for four (4)-year-old Horses "lengthening of steps" is required. This is a variation between the working and medium trot in which a Horse's training is not developed enough for medium trot.

**Medium trot.** This is a pace of moderate lengthening compared to the extended trot but allowing the front legs to still be "rounder" than at the latter. Without hurrying, the Horse goes forward with clearly lengthened steps generated by the impulsion from the hindquarters and through a supple back. The Athlete allows the Horse to carry the head a little more in front of the vertical than at the collected and the working trot, to ~~lower the head and~~ lengthen the neck and to open the frame accordingly. The steps should be even, and the whole movement uphill, balanced and unconstrained.

**Extended trot.** The Horse covers as much ground as possible. Without hurrying, the steps are lengthened to the utmost as a result of great impulsion from the hindquarters. The Athlete allows the Horse to lengthen the frame whilst controlling the poll. The forefeet should touch the ground on the spot towards which they are pointing. The movement of the fore and hind legs should reach equally forward in the moment of extension. The whole movement should be well balanced and unconstrained. The transition into the extension should be softly developed; the transition to collected trot should be smoothly executed by taking more weight on the hindquarters, thereby maintaining rhythm, self-carriage and cadence

All trot work is executed "sitting", unless otherwise indicated in the test.



The trot is a pace in two (2)-beat rhythm with four (4) phases.

(Numbers in circles indicate the beat).

## **THE CANTER:**

The canter is a three (3)-beat pace in six (6) phases where, in canter to the right, for example, the footfall is as follows: left hind, simultaneously right hind and left fore, right fore, followed by a moment of suspension with all four (4) feet in the air before the next stride begins.

The quality of the canter is judged by the general impression, i.e. the regularity and lightness of the strides and the uphill tendency, the impulsion and cadence originating from a supple back and well-engaged hind legs with active hock action. The canter should be equal on both reins maintaining the same rhythm and a natural balance, even after a transition from one canter to another. The Horse should always remain straight on straight lines and correctly bent on curved lines. Unlike in trot, a slight flexion of the poll to the inside is allowed on a straight line.

The canter, always with light, active, cadenced and regular strides, should be moved into without hesitation or haste.

The following canter tempi are recognised: Collected canter, Working canter, Lengthening of strides, Medium canter, and Extended canter.

**Collected canter.** The Horse, remaining "on the bit", moves forward with the neck raised and arched. The hocks, being well engaged, maintain an energetic impulsion, enabling the shoulders to move with greater mobility thus demonstrating self-carriage and an uphill tendency. The Horse's strides are shorter than in the other canters, without losing rhythm, elasticity and cadence.

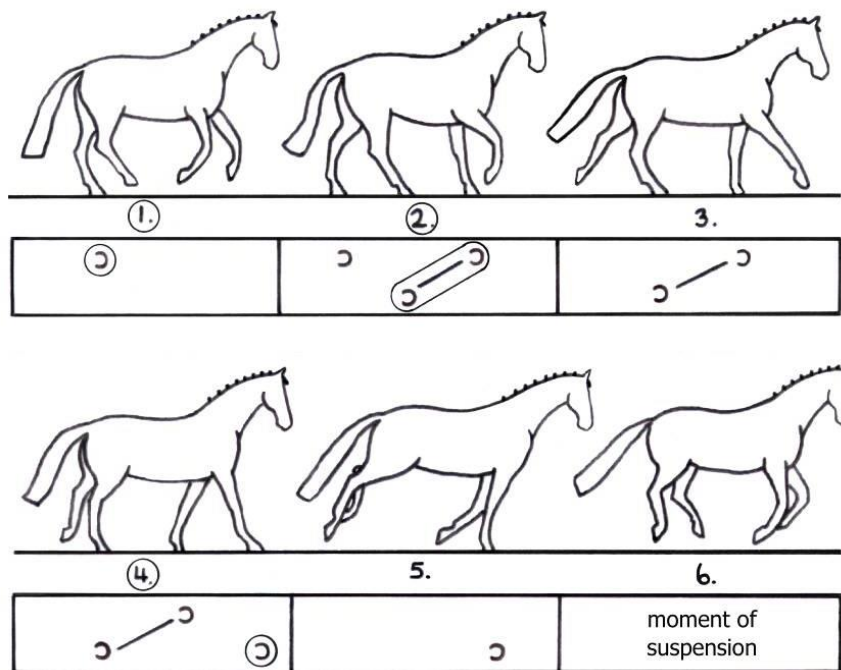
**Working canter.** This is a pace between the collected and the medium canter, in which the training of the Horse is not yet developed enough and ready for collected movements. The Horse shows natural balance while remaining "on the bit", and goes forward with even, light and active strides, good hock action and uphill tendency. The expression "good hock action" underlines the importance of an impulsion originating from the activity of the hindquarters.

**Lengthening of strides.** In the test for four (4)-year-old Horses "lengthening of strides" is required. This is a variation between the working and medium canter in which a Horse's training is not developed enough for medium canter.

**Medium canter.** This is a pace between the working and the extended canter. Without hurrying, the Horse goes forward with clearly lengthened strides and impulsion from the hindquarters. The Athlete allows the Horse to carry the head a little more in front of the vertical than at the collected and the working canter, to lengthen the neck and to open the frame accordingly. The strides cover more ground than in working canter and should be uphill, balanced and unconstrained.

**Extended canter.** The Horse covers as much ground as possible. Without hurrying, the strides are lengthened to the utmost. The Horse remains calm, light and straight as a result of great impulsion from the hindquarters through a supple back. The Athlete allows the Horse to lengthen the frame with a controlled poll and to gain ground. The whole movement should be uphill, well-balanced and unconstrained. The transition into the extension should be softly developed; the transition to collected canter should be smoothly executed by taking more weight on the hindquarters, thereby maintaining rhythm and cadence.

**Counter canter.** The Counter canter is a balancing and straightening movement that must be executed in collection. The Horse canters in correct sequence with the outside foreleg leading with positioning to the side of the leading leg. The foreleg should be aligned to the same track as the hind leg.



The canter is a pace in three-beat rhythm with six (6) phases.

## **THE TRANSITIONS:**

The changes of pace and variations within the paces should be exactly performed at the prescribed marker. The cadence (except in walk) should be maintained up to the moment when the pace or movement is changed or the Horse halts. The transitions within the paces must be clearly defined while maintaining the same rhythm and cadence throughout. The Horse should remain light in hand, calm, and maintain a correct position.

The same applies to transitions from one (1) movement to another, for instance from passage to piaffe or vice versa.

Transitions that come from or into a faulty pace (e.g. from or into a lateral walk) are not considered completely correct.



### **THE HALF HALTS:**

Every movement or transition should be invisibly prepared by barely perceptible half halts. The half halt is an almost simultaneous, coordinated action of the seat, the legs and the hands of the Athlete, with the object of increasing the attention and balance of the Horse before the execution of the movements or transitions to lower and higher paces. By shifting slightly more weight onto the Horse's hindquarters, the engagement of the hind legs and the balance on the haunches are improved for the benefit of the lightness of the forehand and the Horse's balance as a whole.

### **Aim of half halts:**

Increase attention, improve balance and collection of the Horse.

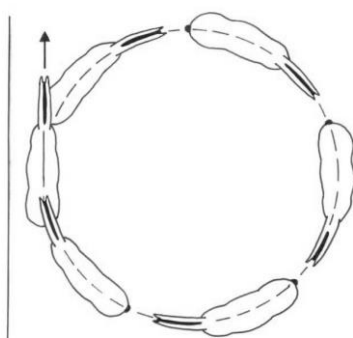
**THE FIGURES:**

The figures asked in Dressage tests are the Volte, the half Volte, the Serpentine and the Figure of eight.

Figures with one (1), two (2) or three (3) loops on the long side or either side of the centre line are called shallow loops. Shallow loops leave/join and cross the lines diagonally, unlike Serpentine which must cross the lines at ninety degrees (90°).

**1. Volte:**

The volte is a circle of eight (8) or ten (10) metres in diameter. If larger than ten (10) metres it is a circle.

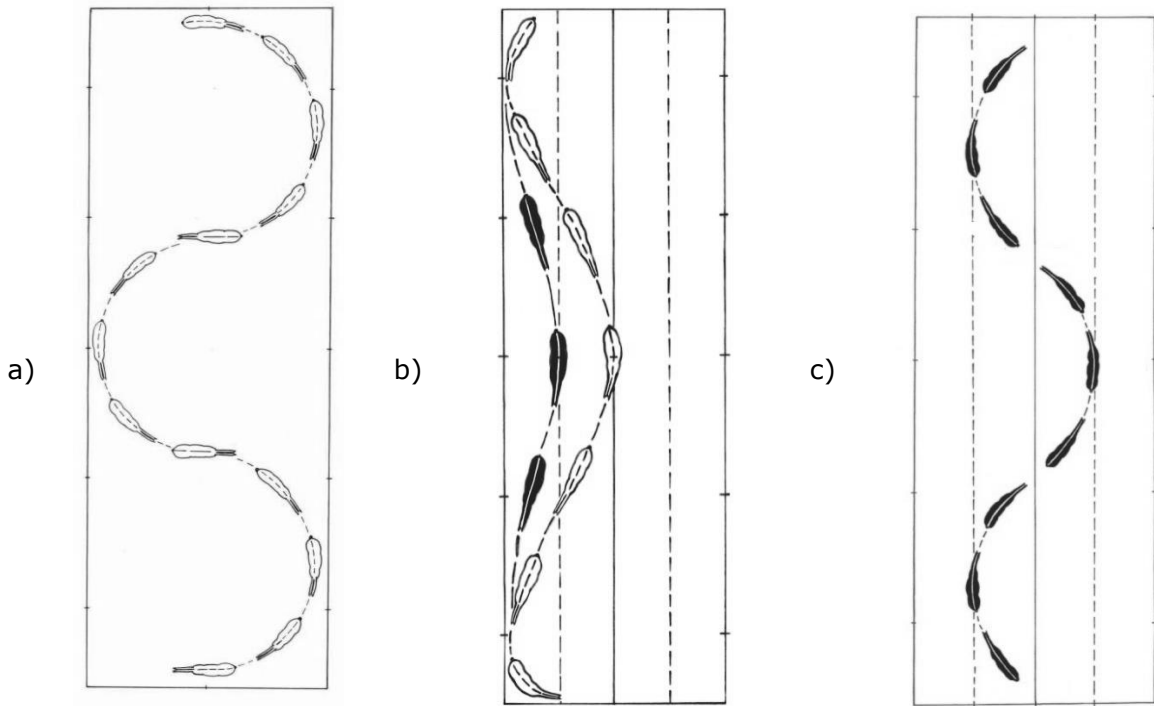
**2. Half Volte (10 m Ø):**

Very closely connected to the volte is the half volte (10 m Ø) which can be shown:

- a) out of the corner, returning to the track at a well described marker with change of rein
- b) a combination of half volte left/ half volte right (or vice versa)

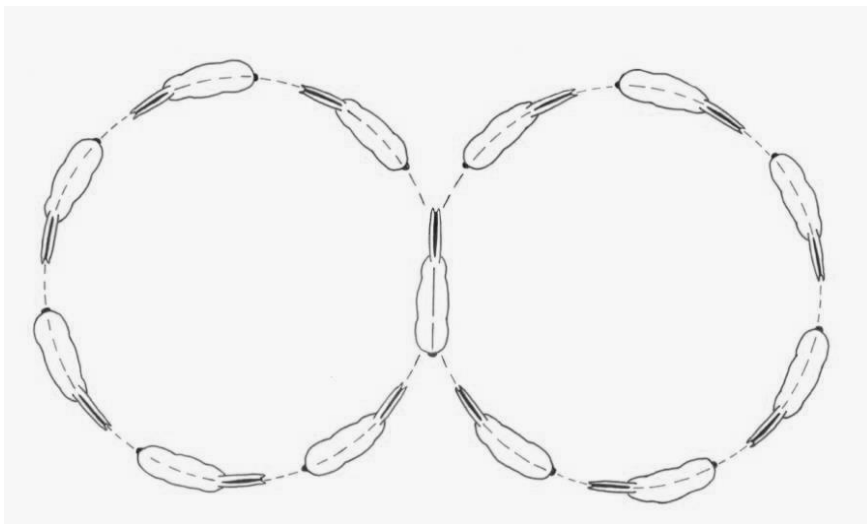
**3. Serpentine:**

The serpentine with several loops touching the long side of the arena consists of half circles connected by a straight line. When crossing the centreline, the Horse should be parallel to the short side (a). Depending on the size of the half circles, the straight connection varies in length. Serpentine with one (1) loop on the long side of the arena are executed with five (5) metres or ten (10) metres distance from the track (b). Serpentine around the centre line are executed between the quarter lines (c).



#### 4. Figure of eight:

This figure consists of two (2) voltes or circles of equal size as prescribed in the test, joined at the centre of the eight (8). The Athlete should make the Horse straight an instant before changing direction at the centre of the figure.

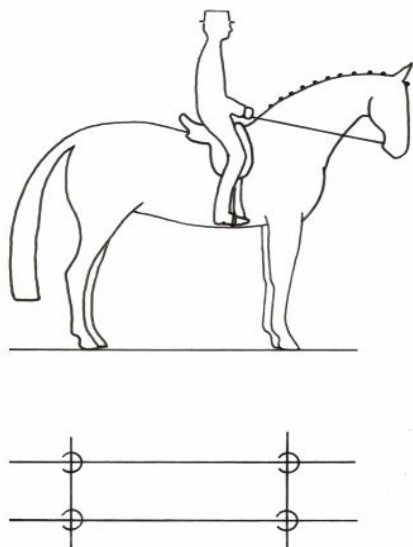


**BASIC DRESSAGE EXERCISES:****THE HALT:**

At the halt the Horse should stand attentive, engaged, motionless, straight and square with the weight evenly distributed over all four (4) legs. The neck should be raised with the poll as the highest point and the nose line slightly in front of the vertical. While remaining "on the bit" and maintaining a light and soft contact with the Athlete's hand, the Horse may quietly chew the bit and should be ready to move off at the slightest indication of the Athlete. The halt must be shown for at least 3 seconds. The halt should be shown throughout the salute.

The halt is obtained by the displacement of the Horse's weight to the hindquarters by a properly increased action of the seat and legs of the Athlete, driving the Horse towards a softly closed hand, causing an almost instantaneous but not abrupt halt at a previously fixed place. The halt is prepared by a series of half-halts (see transitions).

The quality of the paces before and after the halt is an integral part of the assessment.

**LET THE HORSE STRETCH ON A LONG REIN:**

This exercise gives a clear impression of the "throughness" of the Horse and proves its balance, suppleness, obedience and relaxation.

In order to execute the exercise "let the Horse stretch on a long rein" correctly, the Athlete must lengthen the reins and allow the Horse to gradually and confidently stretch its neck forwards and downwards until its mouth reaches more or less a horizontal line corresponding with the point of the shoulder. An elastic and consistent contact with the Athlete's hands must be maintained. The pace must maintain its rhythm and cadence, and the Horse should remain light in the shoulders with the hind legs well engaged. During the retake of the reins the Horse must accept the contact without resistance in the mouth or poll and keep rhythm, balance and impulsion.

**Aim of letting the Horse stretch on a long rein:**

Demonstrating willingness of the Horse to lengthen the neck and to stretch to the bit without losing balance and self-carriage.

**GIVE AND RETAKE THE REINS:**

Give and retake the reins serves above all to demonstrate the Horse's balance and self-carriage. It thereby also checks the balance and independence of the Athlete's seat and whether the Horse is securely on the Athlete's weight- and leg aids, without leaning on the Athlete's hand. Only then will the Horse carry itself.

For two or three Horse lengths the Athlete moves his hands along the crest of the Horse's neck, giving visibly up the contact. Subsequently the hands are taken back to their original position. The position of the Athlete's seat remains unchanged.

The Horse's nose line may come slightly in front of the vertical during this exercise. Nevertheless, the horse should not change its posture or release itself from the aids. The tempo remains unchanged.

**Aim of give and retake the reins:**

Proof of independent seat of the Athlete, maintenance of collection, self-carriage and balance of the Horse.

**REIN-BACK:**

Rein-back is a rearward diagonal movement with a two (2)-beat rhythm but without a moment of suspension. Each diagonal pair of legs is raised and returned to the ground alternatively, with the forelegs aligned on the same track as the hind legs.

During the entire exercise, the Horse should remain "on the bit" with the poll as highest point, maintaining its desire to move forward.

Anticipation or precipitation of the movement, resistance to or evasion of the contact, deviation of the hindquarters from the straight line, spreading or inactive hind legs, and dragging forefeet are serious faults.

The steps are counted as each foreleg moves back. After completing the required number of steps backward, the Horse should move forward in the required pace immediately. Showing a square halt after the rein-back is no longer asked for in any FEI tests. In tests where a rein-back of one (1) Horse's length is required, it should be executed with three (3) or four (4) steps.

Rein-back series (Schaukel) is a combination of two (2) rein-backs with walk steps in between. It should be executed with fluent transitions and the required number of steps. (no longer asked for in any FEI tests anymore).

**Aim of rein-back:**

To show thoroughness and obedience, the Horse should trust the Athlete's aids and accept the aids immediate.

### **SIMPLE CHANGE OF LEG:**

This is a movement in which, after a direct and smooth transition out of canter into walk, with three (3) to five (5) clearly defined steps, an immediate transition is made into the other canter lead.

### **THE CHANGES OF DIRECTIONS:**

At changes of direction, the Horse should adjust the bend of the body to the curvature of the line it follows, remaining supple and following the indications of the Athlete, without any resistance or change of pace, rhythm or speed.

Changes of directions can be executed in the following ways:

- a. Right-angled turn including riding through the corner, i.e.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a volte of approximately six (6) metres.
- b. Short and long diagonal.
- c. Half volte left returning to track with change of rein.
- d. Combination of half volte left/ right or vice versa with change of rein.
- e. Half pirouettes and turn on the haunches.
- f. Serpentine loops.
- g. Counter-changes of hand (in zig-zag)\*. The Horse should be straight for a moment before changing direction.

\*Zig-zag: A movement containing more than two (2) half passes with changes of direction.

### **TURN ON HAUNCHES:**

For younger Horses that are still not able to show collected walk and for Athletes riding tests in Grades when collected walk is not asked for, the "turn on haunches" is an exercise to prepare the Horse for collection. The turn on haunches, a turn of one hundred and eighty (180) degrees, is executed out of medium walk or trot, prepared by half halts to slightly shorten the steps and to improve the ability to bend the joints of the hindquarters. When executed from walk or trot the Horse does not halt before or after the turn. The turn on haunches can be executed on a larger radius (approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$  m) than the  $\frac{1}{2}$  pirouette in walk, but the demands of the training scale concerning rhythm, suppleness, contact activity and straightness are the same. To maintain the forward tendency of the movement one (1) or two (2) forward steps at the beginning of the turn are permitted.

#### **Aim of turn on haunches:**

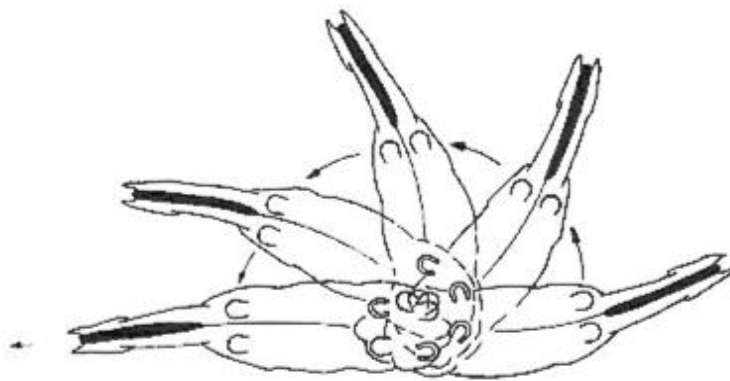
To prepare a Horse for further collection.

**HALF PIROUETTE in WALK:**

A half-pirouette in walk, i.e. a turn of one hundred and eighty (180) degrees is executed out of collected walk with the collection and correct walk rhythm being maintained throughout the exercise. Any loss of rhythm, either by one or both hind legs being stuck or by the loss of the correct four (4) beat is seen as a serious deterioration of the movement. When the Horse exits the half-pirouette it returns to the initial track without crossing the hind legs. A half-pirouette in walk should show a few (3 – 4) steps of collected walk when approaching or after the half pirouette.

**Aim of the half-pirouette in walk:**

To increase flexion of all joints of the hind legs and thereby improve carrying power and collection.



Half-pirouette in walk.

**WORK on Two (2) TRACKS:**

A distinction must be made between the following movements: **Leg-Yielding, Shoulder-in, Travers, Renvers, and Half-pass.**

The aim of movements on two (2) tracks is:

To improve the obedience of the Horse to the cooperative aids of the Athlete.

To supple all parts of the Horse, thereby increasing the freedom of the shoulders and the suppleness of back and quarters, as well as the elasticity of the bond connecting the mouth, the poll, the neck, the back and the haunches.

To improve straightness and cadence (only in trot and canter) and bring the balance and pace into harmony.

## **LEG-YIELDING:**

Leg-yielding is performed in working trot in FEI Competitions (Children, 5-years-old) but can also be shown in walk. The Horse is almost straight, except for a slight flexion at the poll (no bend - that distinguishes leg-yielding from lateral movements) away from the direction in which it moves, so that the Athlete is just able to see the eyebrow and nostril on the inside. The inside legs pass and cross in front of the outside legs.

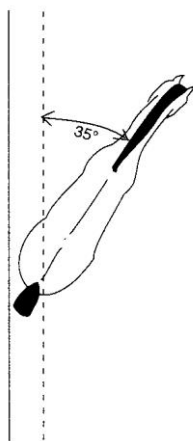
Leg-yielding in walk or working trot should be included in the training of the Horse before it is ready for collected work. Later on, together with the more advanced shoulder-in movement, it is the best means of making a Horse supple, loose and unconstrained for the benefit of the freedom, elasticity and regularity of its paces and the harmony, lightness and ease of its movements.

Leg-yielding can be performed "on the diagonal" in which case the Horse should be as nearly as possible parallel to the long sides of the arena, although the forehand should be slightly in advance of the hindquarters. It can also be performed "along the wall" in which case the Horse should be at an angle of about thirty-five (35) degrees to the direction in which it is moving.

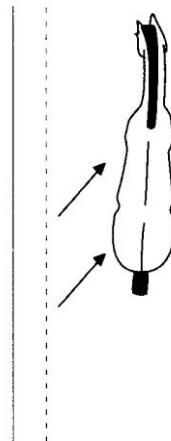
Aim of leg yielding:

To demonstrate the suppleness and lateral responsiveness of the Horse, accepting the Athlete's leg aids.

Leg-yielding along the wall



Leg-yielding on the diagonal





## **ADVANCED DRESSAGE EXERCISES:**

### **LATERAL MOVEMENTS:**

The main aim of lateral movements - shoulder-in, travers, renvers, and half pass is to develop and increase the suppleness of the Horse as well as the engagement of the hindquarters and thereby also the collection and straightness.

In all lateral movements, the Horse is slightly bent and moves on different tracks.

The bend or flexion must never be exaggerated so that it does not impair the rhythm, the balance, the cadence and the fluency of the movement.

The pace should remain free and regular, maintaining a constant impulsion transmitted through a supple back. The impulsion gets often lost because of the Athlete's preoccupation with bending the Horse and pushing it sideways.

### **SHOULDER-IN:**

The shoulder-in is performed in collected trot. The Horse is ridden with a slight but uniform bend around the inside leg of the Athlete maintaining engagement and cadence and a constant angle of approx. thirty (30) degrees. The outside shoulder of the Horse is brought into alignment in front of its inside hip; from the front and from behind one sees three (3) lines. The Horse's inside foreleg passes and crosses in front of the outside foreleg; the inside hind leg does not cross but steps forward under the Horse's body weight following the same track of the outside foreleg, with the lowering of the inside hip.

At the end of the shoulder-in, the forehand is brought back to the track and aligned with the hindquarters unless the shoulder-in is followed by a circle or a consecutive exercise on the diagonal line.

#### **Aims of shoulder-in:**

To increase flexion of the hip and knee joints,

To bring the inner hind leg more under the centre of gravity,

To enhance longitudinal bend, freedom of shoulders, suppleness of back and thereby straightness,

To improve the engagement of the hindquarters and thereby developing carrying power, collection and throughness to show obedience to the Athlete's legs.

### **TRAVERS:**

Travers can be performed in collected trot or collected canter. The Horse is slightly bent around the inside leg of the Athlete but with a greater degree of bend than in shoulder-in.

A constant angle of approximately thirty-five (35) degrees should be shown (from the front and from behind one sees four (4) lines). The forehand remains on the track and the quarters are moved inwards. The Horse's outside legs pass and cross in front of the inside legs. The inside hind legs step forward. Rhythm, balance and cadence are maintained.

The Horse is bent in the direction in which it is moving.

To start the travers, the quarters must leave the track or, after a corner or circle, are not brought back onto the track. At the end of the travers, the quarters are brought back on the track (without any counter-flexion of the poll/neck) as if the Horse would finish a circle.

**Aims of travers:**

To increase flexion of the hip and knee joints,  
To bring the inner hind leg more under the centre of gravity,  
To enhance longitudinal bend, suppleness of back and thereby straightness,  
To improve the engagement of the hindquarters and thereby developing carrying power, collection and thoroughness,  
To show a fluent collected trot movement on a straight line with a greater degree of bend than in shoulder-in.

**RENVERS:**

Renvers is the inverse movement in relation to travers. The hindquarters remain on the track while the forehand is moved inward. To finish the renvers the forehand is aligned with the quarters on the track. Otherwise, the same principles and conditions that apply to the travers are applicable to the renvers.

The Horse is slightly bent around the inside leg of the Athlete. The Horse's outside legs pass and cross in front of the inside legs. The inside hind legs step forward. Rhythm, balance and cadence are maintained.

The Horse is bent in the direction in which it is moving.

**Aims of renvers:**

To increase flexion of the hip and knee joints,  
To bring the inner hind leg more under the centre of gravity,  
To enhance longitudinal bend, suppleness of back and thereby straightness,  
To improve the engagement of the hindquarters and thereby developing carrying power, collection and thoroughness,  
To show a fluent collected trot movement on a straight line with a greater degree of bend than in shoulder-in.

**HALF PASS:**

Half pass is a variation of travers, executed on a diagonal line instead of along the wall. It can be performed in collected trot (and in passage in a freestyle) or in collected canter. The Horse should be slightly bent around the inside leg of the Athlete and in the direction in which it is moving. The Horse should maintain the same rhythm, cadence, self-carriage and balance throughout the whole movement. In order to give more freedom and mobility to the shoulders, it is of great importance that the impulsion be maintained, especially the engagement of the inside hind leg. The Horse's body is nearly parallel to the long side of the arena with the forehand slightly in advance of the hindquarters.

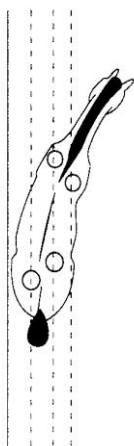
In trot, the outside legs pass and cross in front of the inside legs, the inside hind legs steps forward. In canter, the movement is performed in a series of forward/ sideways strides in which the legs do not cross.

Half passes can be also shown with one counter change of hand or as a "zig-zag"

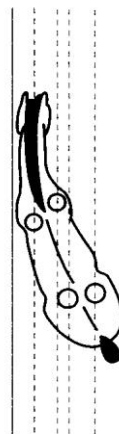
## Aims of half pass in trot and canter:

To increase flexion of the hip and knee joints,  
To bring the inner hind leg more under the centre of gravity,  
To enhance longitudinal bend, suppleness of back and thereby straightness,  
To improve the engagement of the hindquarters and thereby developing carrying power, collection and throughness ,  
To show a fluent collected trot movement on a straight line with a greater degree of bend than in shoulder-in.

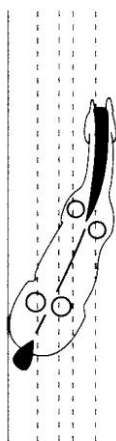
Shoulder in



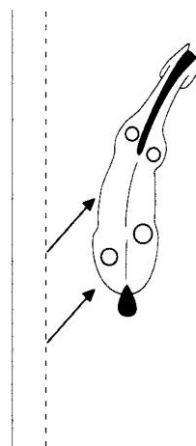
Travers



Renvers



Half Pass



## FLYING CHANGE of LEG:

The flying change of leg is performed in one (1) stride with the front and hind legs changing at the same moment. The change of the leading front and hind leg takes place during the moment of suspension. The aids should be precise and unobtrusive.

Flying changes of leg can also be executed in series at every 4th, 3rd, 2nd or at every stride. The Horse, even in the series, remains light, calm and straight with lively impulsion,

maintaining the same rhythm and balance throughout the series concerned. In order not to restrict or restrain the lightness, fluency, uphill tendency and groundcover of the flying changes in series, enough impulsion must be maintained.

**Aim of flying change of leg:**

To show the reaction, sensitivity and obedience of the Horse to the aids for the change of leg.

**PIROUETTE and HALF PIROUETTE in CANTER:**

The Pirouette/ half-pirouette is a turn of three hundred and sixty (360) degrees/ hundred and eighty (180) degrees executed on two (2) tracks, with a radius equal to the length of the Horse and the forehand moving around the hind quarters. The inside hind leg describes a circle as small as possible.

Pirouettes/ half-pirouettes are usually carried out in collected walk (180°) or collected canter but can also be executed in piaffe.

At the pirouette (half-pirouette) the forefeet and the outside hind foot move around the inside hind foot. The inside hind leg describes a circle as small as possible.

In executing the pirouette or the half-pirouette in canter, the Athlete should maintain lightness and uphill tendency of the Horse while accentuating the collection. The Horse's hindquarters are well engaged and lowered and show a good flexion of the joints. An integral part of the movement is the quality of the canter strides before and after the pirouette. The strides should show an increased activity and collection before the pirouette, and jump and balance should be maintained until the end of the pirouette.

The Horse, slightly flexed in the poll and bent in the direction in which it is turning, remains "on the bit" with light contact, turning smoothly around. The poll remains the highest point during the entire movement.

During the pirouettes/ half-pirouettes, the Horse should maintain its activity and never move backwards or sideways.

The quality of the pirouettes/ half-pirouettes is judged according to the suppleness, lightness and regularity, and the precision and smoothness of the entrance and exit. Full pirouettes in canter should be executed in six (6) to eight (8) strides – half pirouettes in three (3) to four (4) strides.

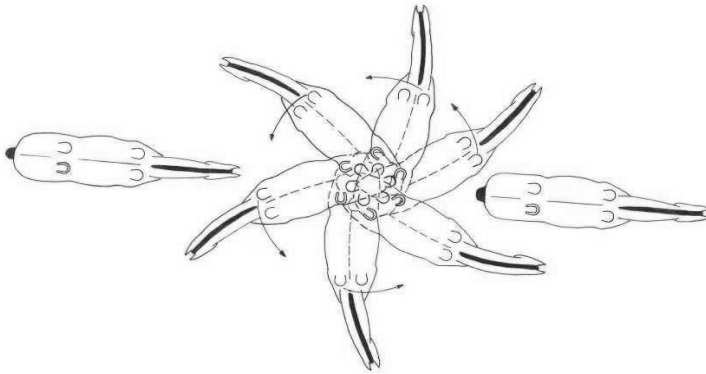
In the pirouette or half-pirouette in canter, the Judges should be able to recognize correct and clear canter strides although the feet of the diagonal inside hind leg/ outside front leg – are not touching the ground simultaneously.

**Aims of the pirouette and half-pirouette in canter:**

To increase flexion of all joints of the hind legs and thereby improve carrying power and collection,

To demonstrate the willingness of the Horse to turn around the hind quarters with the inner hind leg describing as small a circle as possible, while maintaining impulsion and activity of the

canter. Proof of straightness, balance and quality of canter during, before and after the movement.



Pirouette in canter.

### **THE PIAFFE:**

Piaffe is a highly collected, elevated, rhythmical diagonal movement giving the impression of remaining in place. The Horse's back and top line are supple and elastic. The hindquarters are lowered; the haunches with active hocks are well engaged, giving great freedom, lightness and mobility to the shoulders and forehand. Each diagonal pair of legs is raised and returned to the ground alternately, with spring and regularity.

In principle, the height of the toe of the raised forefoot should be level with the middle of the cannon bone of the other supporting foreleg. The toe of the raised hind foot should reach just above the fetlock joint of the other supporting hind leg.

The neck should be raised and gracefully arched, with the poll as the highest point. The Horse should remain "on the bit" with a supple poll, maintaining soft contact. The body of the Horse should move in a supple and harmonious movement.

Piaffe should show true commitment and must always be animated by a lively activity and characterised by perfect balance. While giving the impression of remaining in place, there may be a visible inclination to advance, this being displayed by the Horse's eager acceptance to move forward as soon as it is asked.

Moving even slightly backwards, irregular or jerky steps with the hind or front legs, no clear diagonal steps, crossing either the fore or hind legs, hoof-stepping or swinging either the forehand or the hindquarters from one side to the other, getting wide behind or in front, moving too much forward or double-beat rhythm are all serious faults. Stretching out the front legs to carry more weight (wide base) or narrowing the base extremely is also seen as a basic mistake.

### **Aim of piaffe:**

To demonstrate the highest degree of collection while giving the impression of remaining in place.

### **THE PASSAGE:**

Passage is a measured, very collected, elevated, regular and cadenced trot. It is characterised by a pronounced engagement of the hindquarters, a more accentuated flexion of haunches, knees and hocks, and the graceful elasticity of the movement. Each diagonal pair of legs is raised and returned to the ground alternately, with cadence and a prolonged moment of suspension.

In principle, the height of the toe of the raised forefoot should be level with the middle of the cannon bone of the other supporting foreleg. The toe of the raised hind foot should be slightly above the fetlock joint of the other supporting hind leg.

The neck should be raised and gracefully arched with the poll as the highest point and the nose line close to the vertical. The Horse should remain light, and soft "on the bit" without altering the cadence. The Horse's back and top line are supple and elastic, the impulsion remains lively and pronounced.

Irregular steps with the hind or front legs, swinging the forehand or the hindquarters from one side to the other, as well as jerky movements of the forelegs or the hind legs, dragging the hind legs or showing double-beat in the moment of suspension, or shortly before touching the ground are serious faults.

#### **Aim of passage:**

To demonstrate the highest degree of collection, cadence and suspension in trot.

### **TRANSITIONS PASSAGE - PIAFFE – PASSAGE (see TRANSITIONS):**

#### **THE GENERAL IMPRESSION:**

1. Harmonious presentation of the Athlete-Horse-Combination
  - overall positive impression of the entire performance,
  - harmonious cooperation between Horse and Athlete with discreet use of aids,
  - all aspects of the Training Scale (rhythm, suppleness, contact, impulsion, straightness, collection) according to the level of the test are well fulfilled.
  
2. Athlete's position and seat
  - well-balanced, elastic, sitting deep in the centre of the saddle, smoothly absorbing the movement of the Horse with the loins and hips,
  - supple thighs with the legs steady and stretched well down,
  - heels should be the lowest point,
  - upper part of the body should be tall and supple,
  - contact should be independent from the Athlete's seat,
  - hands should be carried steadily close together, with the thumb as the highest point and a straight line from the supple elbow through the hand to the Horse's mouth, elbows to be close to the body.

All of these criteria enable the Athlete to follow the movements of the Horse smoothly and freely or react appropriately if the Horse shows tension or resistance of any kind.

3. Discreet and effective influence of the aids
  - invisible way of communication between Athlete and Horse,

- effectiveness of the Athlete's aids determines the precise fulfilment of the required movements of the test,
- ability to prepare all movements in a sensitive way.

## **MARKING OF FUNDAMENTAL MISTAKES IN DRESSAGE MOVEMENTS**

### **(FIREWALLS and DEDUCTIONS)**

**Preliminary remarks** (see also Object, General Principles of Dressage).

The most important task for the Judge is to keep the **Welfare of the Horse** in mind. Therefore, he/she must pay special attention to all signs of discomfort and penalize them significantly - be it by deductions from the originally intended mark for minor mistakes or in case of serious mistakes by a 'Firewall', i.e. by a mark that shall not exceed five (5).

The **Scale of Training** is of great importance for the presentation of a Dressage Horse. General training deficiencies must never be overlooked. Severe, basic faults in rhythm, suppleness, contact, or lack of impulsion, straightness and collection must be clearly marked down. All low marks must be explained to the Athlete by appropriate remarks, however, it is always helpful for the communication between Judge and Athlete if the Judge comments also on higher marks.

Apart from irregularities in rhythm or severe suppleness issues, such as a tight or hollow back, a severely agitated tail or arrhythmic, compressed breathing in certain movements, Judges must pay special attention to all contact problems. A neck that is pulled together, an unsteady contact or a very busy, clearly open mouth with the tongue drawn up must be seen as fundamental mistakes. If the tongue is clearly hanging out to the side the mark cannot be higher than 5, whenever it occurs or is noticed by the Judge - maybe even lower when the tongue is in addition over the bit.

## **1. PACES**

### **WALK:**

#### **Characteristics of a correct walk - FEI Dressage Handbook p. 6 and 24 – 41**

**Regular**, active, well marked four-time beat, full relaxation and suppleness throughout the body, consistency of tempo. Correct head and neck position, correct contact. Smooth transition into the walk, precision of line and markers.

#### **Collected walk:**

Regular, active, energetic walk, steps shortened and heightened, engagement of hind legs, good hock action. Neck raised and arched, poll highest point. Steady, light contact. Change of outline when coming from extended walk.

#### **Medium walk:**

Regular, energetic walk with moderate lengthening of steps and frame. Nose line slightly more in front of the vertical than at collected walk. Overtrack of one (1) – two (2) hooves, not like extended walk which asks for more overtrack.

#### **Extended walk:**

Freedom of shoulders and clear overtrack (= groundcover) without haste or losing regularity, showing relaxation and the ability to move through the whole body. Stretching of head and neck **to the bit** without losing contact with the mouth or the control of the poll.



<b>Problems with rhythm and submission:</b>	<b>Mark</b>
- no characteristics of walk being performed	0
- walk barely recognisable - extremely/very uneven behind or in front - very clear pacing, jogging or passaging for most of the sequence, multiple breaks of pace - severe resistance throughout	1, 2, or 3 (depending on severity)
- clearly uneven behind or in front - mainly pacing, several jog/passage steps - breaking pace for several steps - resistance, disobedience	Below 5 (lower depending on severity of problem)
- lacking a clearly defined four-beat; legs of the same side do not show a 'V' for a short moment - somewhat uneven or tense steps - 1 - 2 jog steps - extended walk: in rhythm but not reaching footprints of forefoot - collected walk: in rhythm but not asking for any collection, overtracking three (3) hooves or more	5 – 5.5
- pacing for a few steps after a transition	Not automatically 5, depending on entirety of movement
- artificially raised or stiffened front legs	7 max. when shown in a mild form, lower when more extreme

### **Additional Considerations:**

- **Resistance:** Resistance against the bit in the transitions e.g. from extended to collected walk reduces the mark, mostly for the collected walk. Depending on where and why it happens (e.g. when shortening the reins to collect the horse). Not necessarily penalised in both tempi.
- **Slight overtrack in collected walk:** Acceptable when the Horse shows true collection, especially after a huge extended walk. However, if the Athlete cannot collect the Horse and allows him to overtrack two (2) hooves or more the mark has to be diminished by a deduction, if overtracking 3 hooves or more the mark cannot be higher than 5.5 max.
- **Extended walk:** Not stretching to the bit/ remaining clearly overbent in the neck or the Athlete giving up the contact leads to a deduction of 1 – 1.5 points from the mark for the extended walk.
- **Execution at letter prescribed:** Each walk should be shown exactly from/to the letter prescribed and not anticipating the transition into the next movement - otherwise a deduction should be made in either the walk or in the next movement due to a lack of precision. However, if the transition is executed much too early or late (clearly more than 5 metres before/ after), the deduction has to be considered in both (see FEI Dressage Handbook p.101).

**TROT:**

**Characteristics of a correct trot - FEI Dressage Handbook p. 7 and 43- 67**

Regularity and elasticity of steps, cadence and impulsion, supple back, well-engaged hind quarters, ability to maintain same rhythm and natural balance. The following trots are recognised: Working trot, lengthening of steps, collected trot, medium trot, extended trot. The greater the lengthening of trot that is required, the more lengthening of the frame must be shown.

**Collected trot:**

Regular, active, expressive trot with shortened, elastic, cadenced steps. Hind legs carry weight, stepping further under point of gravity. Neck raised and arched, poll highest point. Steady, light contact. Straight = on one (1) track in figures and corners.

**Medium trot:**

Moderate lengthening of steps expected, slightly lengthened frame. Regularity, activity, self-carriage and balance. Not to be expected like extended trot!.

**Extended trot:**

Utmost maximum of impulsion with as much lengthening and groundcover as possible, utmost maximum energy and engagement of hind quarters, self-carriage and balance. Hind feet overtrack as much as possible, front feet touch ground in direction to where they are pointing. Supple back throughout.

<b>Problems with rhythm and submission:</b>	<b>Mark</b>
- no characteristics of trot being performed	0
- extremely uneven (giving clear impression of lameness) (FEI Dressage Handbook p. 48)	Elimination
- if this Horse is not eliminated by the C-Judge	4 or below
- trot barely recognisable - multiple breaks of pace - severe resistance, disobedience throughout	1, 2, or 3 (depending on severity)
- severe loss of regularity in a movement - breaking pace for several steps or in a transition - resistance, disobedience - extension not attempted	Below 5 (lower depending on severity of problem)
- short stumble, momentary loss of regularity, - one leg higher or unlevelled for only a few steps	6 or below

**Additional Considerations:**

**Rhythm issues:**

- It is not recommended to ring a Horse out in lateral work as it might only be blocked by the Athlete’s hand. Make sure it gives a clear impression of lameness also on a straight line. This must always be clearly stated in the remarks to the Athlete.

## The transitions from/to the trot extensions:

- Watch **both** transitions, into and back from the medium/extended trot including the precision of both corners (bend, riding into the corners).
- Do not give the mark immediately at the end of the diagonal if the short side is still part of the movement! In the case of a separate transition mark, the short side is part of this mark!
- React when the Athlete rushes through the transition without even trying to collect. If there is no separate mark for the transition, reduce the mark for the extension by 0.5 - 1 point.
- Judges should 'reward' an Athlete with a higher mark for the transition when he/she very precisely bends the Horse in the corners/ executes the transitions very correctly.

## CANTER:

### Characteristics of a correct canter - see FEI Dressage Handbook p. 8 and 68 - 93

Regularity and lightness, natural balance, engagement of hind legs, ability and willingness to carry weight, uphill tendency, straightness, equality on both reins.

The following canters are recognised: Working canter, lengthening of strides, collected canter, medium canter, extended canter.

### Collected canter:

Regular, fully balanced and cadenced, hind legs moving forward under Horse's body, carrying weight, neck raised and arched, poll highest point. Uphill tendency, supple, straight.

**Medium canter:** Forward with clearly lengthened strides, maintaining uphill tendency and straightness.

**Extended canter:** Strides are lengthened to the utmost without hurrying, or losing balance, straightness or uphill tendency.

<b>Problem with rhythm and submission:</b>	<b>Mark</b>
- no characteristics of canter being performed	0
- canter barely recognisable due to tension - breaking pace for several strides - severe resistance and crookedness throughout - out of/ not enough under Athlete's control	1, 2 or 3 (depending on severity)
- showing some resistance or some disunited/ wrong canter strides - breaking pace for some strides - wrong strike off, not immediately corrected	Below 5 (lower depending on severity of problem)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- strike off with one disunited stride, immediately corrected</li> <li>- proceed in canter through several trot steps</li> <li>- resisting transition for 1-2 strides</li> <li>- momentary break of pace in the canter section</li> </ul>	5 or below
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- unintentional flying change between two movements, immediately corrected</li> </ul>	Deduction of 2 p. max 6 (watch the whole movement before deduction)

### Additional Considerations:

- The flying change should be the last stride on the diagonal to see whether the Horse remains straight. A change shown in the corner (too late, not straight) must affect the mark for the extended canter or - in the case of a separate mark - the mark for the transition and the change - deduction of 0.5 point (or more if done very late and crooked).
- Transition to canter: The mark for the canter should not be given until the movement has been completed because the judge also has to assess the quality of the canter.
- The mark for the proceed must be reduced when the canter comes from a jogging or pacing walk (unclear transition) Think of rewarding a well performed proceed into canter: precise, straight, uphill, high quality of canter, coming from a clear pace.
- The transition after a weak extension has to be marked below seven (7) (because it did not come from a real extension!).
- If a Horse shows unintentional flying changes between two movements, the Judge should check in which movement this error belongs - a change of the previous mark might be necessary.

### Problems in EXTENDED CANTER, TRANSITION and CHANGE:

Problems in the extended canter are not always easy to solve because the difficult situations happen very fast and the Judge must decide very quickly.

<b>Case study 1:</b> <b>Correct extension, disunited flying change or Horse changes back and forth in transition</b>	
<b>1 mark</b> for extension, transition and flying change (marked as one exercise)	Max. 5 Lower for hurried extension or serious problem in change
<b>2 separate</b> marks: one for extension  one for transition and fl. change	Depending on quality  Below 5, 3 or below when with resistance or through trot

<b>Case study 2:</b> <b>Horse changes in extension, is corrected, correct flying change afterwards</b>	
<b>1 mark</b> for extension, transition and change	Below 5
<b>2 separate</b> marks: one for extension,  one for transition and change	Below 5  Depending on quality  If the transition cannot be executed from a clear extended canter, the mark for transition and change has to be lowered

<b>Case study 3:</b> <b>Horse shows some resistance at the end of the extension, changes into disunited canter or falls into trot, no transition, no clear flying change</b>	
<b>1 mark</b> for extension, transition and change:	Below 5 (lower depending on severity of problem)
<b>2 separate</b> marks: one for extension  one for transition and change	Depending on quality  2 or below
	<b>0 or 1 only when no canter strides are shown throughout entire movement</b>

## 2. MOVEMENTS:

### Entrance and HALT:

<b>Problem:</b>	<b>Mark</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- severe resistance and disobedience throughout</li> <li>- halt barely shown</li> <li>- loss of regularity, breaking pace(s) for several strides</li> </ul>	1, 2 or 3 (depending on severity)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- extremely short immobility with tension</li> <li>- resistance in halt or through transitions</li> <li>- breaking pace(s) before/after for a few strides</li> </ul>	Below 5 (lower depending on severity of problem)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- halt very insecure</li> <li>- stepping back with two (2) legs</li> <li>- halt very inaccurately placed (~ 5 m before/ after marker),</li> <li>- very crooked</li> <li>- resting one leg throughout</li> </ul>	Max 5  5 - 5.5

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- repositioning one leg in halt to find the balance after transition</li> <li>- slight loss of straightness</li> </ul>	6.5 or below
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**Additional Considerations:**

- Watch also the self-carriage, the steadiness of the contact and the poll remaining the highest point (!) If coming too low or above the bit, deduct accordingly 0.5 or 1 point.
- Athletes not taking the reins in one hand at the salute will be penalised with the deduction of 0.5 % from the total. (FEI Dressage Rules 2023, Art. 424, 4.2.2).

**½ WALK PIROUETTE / TURN on HAUNCHES:**

Problem:	Mark
- severe resistance and disobedience throughout	1, 2 or 3 (depending on severity)
- stuck behind for some steps - stuck behind for one (1) step	Below 5 5 or below
- clearly not in 4-beat <b>throughout</b> - lost 4-beat in second part	Below 5 5 or below
- very large - crossing hind legs for several steps - very wide or stepping out/ stepping sideways behind - stepping back	5 or below
- rather large - losing self carriage, diving down	5.5 or below
- (clear) outside flexion <b>throughout</b>	5 or below

**Additional Considerations:**

- **Turn on haunches** (Children, 5 years-old) are shown from/ to medium walk or trot; **½ walk pirouettes** are required from collected walk whereby ponies and 6 years old only have to shorten their steps momentarily into the ½ walk pirouette. Walk pirouettes have to be finished with a few clear collected walk steps. The proceed into canter directly out of the walk pirouette (JUN test) or a walk pirouette without some clear walk steps before/after the pirouette (e.g. in a FS) has to diminish the mark.
- Watch also the activity, correct bend and flexion, uphill tendency, forward tendency, size and that the Horse does not escape with the hind legs to either the inside or to the outside. Closing one hind leg under the body towards the centre of gravity.
- Walk pirouettes must be judged independently from the quality of the walk.

**SIMPLE CHANGE of LEG:**

<b>Problem:</b>	<b>Mark</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- severe resistance and disobedience throughout</li> </ul>	1,2 or 3 (depending on severity)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- loss of counter canter without being corrected clearly before the change or</li> <li>- change of lead before the transition to walk → no change</li> </ul>	Below 5 for both, change and counter canter
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- wrong or disunited canter after 2<sup>nd</sup> transition</li> <li>- <b>both</b> transitions with trot steps into/out of walk</li> <li>- walk steps clearly pacing or jogging</li> </ul>	Below 5 (lower depending on severity of problem)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>one</b> transition through some trot steps into or out of walk</li> <li>- walk steps unclear in rhythm</li> <li>- clear transitions but only one (1) walk step</li> <li>- canter and walk not regular enough</li> <li>- very inaccurate execution concerning the number of walk steps (7 or more)</li> <li>- very inaccurate execution concerning the placement</li> </ul>	5 or below

**(Half) VOLTE, CIRCLE, SERPENTINE:**

**Additional Considerations:**

**1. Volte (8 or 10 m):**

The accuracy: correct size in required place, shape. Deduct 0.5 - 1 p. for imprecise riding.

A volte in counter canter in a Pony Riders Freestyle cannot replace the compulsory movement volte which has to be shown in true canter (!).

**2. Half Volte (10 m):**

The accuracy of the 10 m half volte, the straightness on the centre line and the correct change of bend and flexion. Deduct 0.5 - 1 p. for imprecise riding when the half voltes are clearly too large, or the change of flexion/ bend is not shown precisely on the centre line, or the Horse does not remain on one (1) track.

**3. Circle (20 m):**

The accuracy of the circle line and the 10 m radius in ½ circles (often shown too flat). Deduct 0.5 - 1 p. for imprecise riding.

**4. Serpentine:**

The accuracy: starting/ending at the middle of the short side, cutting 1st and last corner, equality and positioning of the loops, correct change of bend and flexion. Deduct 0.5 - 1 p. for imprecise riding.

### **REIN-BACK:**

<b>Problem:</b>	<b>Mark</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- severe resistance and disobedience throughout</li> <li>Horse getting out of control</li> </ul>	1, 2 or 3 (depending on severity)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- clear resistance, clearly against the Athlete's hand</li> <li>- no immobility at halt</li> <li>- no diagonal steps throughout</li> <li>- very hurried</li> <li>- both transitions with a clear loss of rhythm</li> <li>- (very) extremely crooked</li> </ul>	Below 5 (lower depending on severity of problem)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- halt short</li> <li>- immobility not direct/ not completely established</li> <li>- stepping forward after halt</li> <li>- incorrect number of steps</li> <li>- one transition with a loss of rhythm</li> <li>- rein-back not fully diagonal</li> <li>- Horse dropping poll, nose line behind vertical (!) or slightly above the bit (!)</li> <li>- loss of straightness</li> </ul>	Deduction up to 2 p., depending on quality of rein-back

### **MOVEMENTS on 2 TRACKS:**

**Leg-yielding → no bend, only flexion**

**Shoulder-in, Travers, Renvers, Half pass in trot → lateral movements**

<b>Problem:</b>	<b>Mark</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- severe resistance and disobedience throughout</li> </ul>	1, 2 or 3 (depending on severity)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- severe loss of regularity throughout</li> <li>- break of pace, not immediately corrected</li> <li>- no bend at all, flexed to the wrong direction (except leg-yielding which is not supposed to have bend)</li> <li>- complete loss of energy, loss of desire to move forward</li> </ul>	Below 5 (lower depending on severity of problem)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- not precisely performed from point to point</li> <li>- incorrect positioning at the start</li> </ul>	Deduction up to 2 p., (depending on severity of problem)

### **Additional Considerations:**

#### **1. Shoulder-In:**

At the end of the shoulder in, before the corner, the forehand is brought back to the track and aligned with the hindquarters, however, not before a volte or a diagonal line.

#### **2. Half Pass:**

If a half pass begins and/or ends much earlier than at the markers prescribed, it can make the execution of the movement itself or of the following movement easier.

- e.g. in PSG or Young Riders' tests when the trot half passes are clearly finished before G,



the Athlete avoids to ride forward/ sideways.

- e.g. in PSG when the 2<sup>nd</sup> canter half pass is clearly finished at R instead of at M, the Athlete gains more space to prepare the flying change at M.
- e.g. in the GPS when the trot half passes start clearly before the marker, the Athlete can show them less steep than required.

If a movement is not precisely performed from marker to marker, the Judge should think of deducting 0.5 – 1 p. from the original mark.

### 3. Zig-zag half passes (in trot):

Make sure that the zig-zag half passes are equidistant from the centreline, symmetrically executed and far enough sideways e.g. to the quarterline when asked for 5 m sideways. The bending should be equal to both sides. If the Athlete does not show the zig-zag according to the requirements, the Judge should deduct 0.5 – 1 p.

### HALF PASSES in CANTER:

<b>Problem:</b>	<b>Mark</b>
- severe resistance and disobedience throughout	1, 2 or 3 (depending on severity)
- break of pace - no bend at all, flexed to the wrong side	Below 5 (lower depending on severity of problem)
- 1 disunited change - loss of desire to move forward	5.5 or below

### ZIG-ZAGS in CANTER:

<b>Problem:</b>	
- showing some half passes in wrong canter or trot	1, 2 or 3 (depending on severity)
- 2 and more counting mistakes - 2 and more disunited flying changes - several changes short behind - clear loss of canter - not reacting on aids, showing a half pass in wrong canter - too much counter flexion throughout	Below 5 (lower depending on severity of problem)
- 1 counting mistake - 1 disunited change	5.5 or below
- 1 change short behind - zig-zags not symmetrical, not from/to quarterline when asked for 5 m sideways - 1-2 strides of counter flexion before changing direction - one change short behind	Deduction of 0.5 - 1 p., (depending on severity of problem)

**Additional Considerations:**

- The marks should be diminished by a deduction of 0.5 - 1 p. if the zig-zags are generally badly placed, not equidistant from the centreline, too steep or hardly sideways. The last change in a GP canter zig-zag has to be at G, even if the zig-zags finished earlier.
- Half passes in Freestyle should not be less steep than in the respective class.

**FLYING CHANGE of LEG:**

<b>Problem:</b>	<b>Mark</b>
- not shown: '0' is only possible if there is no flying change shown, the transition is through trot or walk and the Horse does not show any canter before/after the	0
- severe resistance and disobedience throughout - late behind/in front or disunited for several strides	1, 2 or 3 (depending on severity)
- late behind/in front (disunited) for one stride:	Below 5 (lower depending on severity of problem)
- change visibly not on aids for 1 stride, but correct	Deduction of 0.5 - 1 p.

**Additional Considerations:**

- A flying change after an extension should be the last stride on the diagonal to prove that the Horse is straight in the transition. An execution on the track or even in the corner should reduce the mark for the change by 0.5 – 1 p.
- The mark for a correct change that is executed after the Athlete’s aids or anticipating the aids should also be reduced by 0.5 – 1 p. and cannot be higher than six (6).

**FLYING CHANGES in SEQUENCES:**

<b>Problem:</b>	<b>Mark</b>
- severe resistance and disobedience throughout - disunited canter for many strides - many incorrect changes and mistakes in number	1, 2 or 3 (depending on severity)
- 2 mistakes in changes (late behind or in front) - interruptions of sequence - break of pace within the sequence, immediately corrected - Horse shows sequence of flying changes only after several attempts	Below 5 (lower depending on severity of problem)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1-2 changes short behind</li> <li>- 1-2 changes with the hind legs together</li> <li>- 1 disunited change</li> <li>- correct changes, but Horse breaks pace clearly before or after sequence (immediately corrected)</li> <li>- Horse not immediately reacting on Athlete's aids or anticipating aids</li> </ul>	<p>5.5 or below, (depending on number of changes and quality of movement)</p>
<p><b>Mistakes in numbers:</b> (Mark depends on number of changes and quality of movement)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- several/many mistakes in numbers</li> <li>- two (2) counting mistakes</li> <li>- insufficient number, two (2) changes less than required</li> <li>- several changes more than required</li> <li>- one (1) counting mistake</li> <li>- changes of high quality, two (2) more than required</li> <li>- changes of very high quality, two (2) more than required, shown on aids of Athlete → his/her counting mistake</li> </ul>	<p>Below 4</p> <p>Below 5</p> <p>5.5 or below</p> <p>Deduction of 2 p., max 6</p>

**Additional Considerations:**

- Check who made the mistake? Did the Athlete miscount or did the Horse not react on the aids which is worse.
- Set the mistakes in relation to the numbers of required changes: Two (2) incorrect changes in a sequence of three (3) is clearly worse than two (2) out of 15.
- Observe whether the mistakes in the changes (hind legs together, shorter to one side) all happen on the same lead.
- A poor quality of canter before/ after the sequence has to lower the mark.

## CANTER PIROUETTE:

<b>Problem:</b>	<b>Mark</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- severe resistance and disobedience throughout</li> <li>- clear interruption of pace, falling into trot or walk during pirouette</li> </ul>	1, 2 or 3 (depending on severity)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Horse changes for 1-2 strides during the pirouette</li> <li>- hind legs clearly jumping together <b>throughout</b></li> <li>- Horse breaks canter rhythm/falls momentarily into trot/walk</li> <li>- loss of control, full pirouette in 3 - 4 strides</li> <li>- over rotating, losing balance at end</li> <li>- huge, describing small circle/turning around the centre</li> <li>- extremely crooked into/out of pirouette</li> </ul>	Below 5 (lower depending on severity of problem)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- changing <b>into/out</b> of the pirouette, immediately corrected</li> <li>- losing pace directly before/after pirouette, immediately corrected</li> <li>- hind legs tending to jump together</li> <li>- loss of clear canter rhythm</li> <li>- big, hind legs describing small circle</li> <li>- extreme climbing (= blocked in back, losing impulsion)</li> <li>- Horse clearly flexed in wrong direction</li> </ul>	5 or below
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Horse changes <b>shortly before</b> pirouette when being collected or <b>shortly afterwards</b> but is immediately corrected (balance problem)</li> <li>- clearly losing engagement and fluency</li> <li>- totally crooked into/out of pirouette</li> </ul>	5.5 or below, depending on quality of pirouette  5.5 or below
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- late/ early execution, not on prescribed line</li> <li>- slight crookedness when approaching/ after the pirouette</li> <li>- average quality of canter before after a correct pirouette</li> </ul>	Deduction of 0.5 – 1 p., (depending on severity of the problem)

### **Additional Considerations:**

- Too late or early execution of a pirouette has to be penalized by an appropriate deduction of points, depending on where the pirouette was shown. Deductions also if the pirouette is not shown on the required line.
- Change of legs approximately 3- 4 strides before/ after the pirouette, not connected with the pirouette → deduction of 2 points but max 6.
- "Climbing" is an exaggerated elevation of the forehead often not anymore connected into the bridle. The pirouette becomes slow motion and looks unnatural. The Horse stiffens its back and loses jump and forward tendency.
- A poor quality before/ after the (½) pirouette has to lower the mark for the (½) pirouette.

**PIAFFE:**

Problem: <b>Problems with the rhythm:</b>	<b>Mark</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- severe resistance and disobedience throughout</li> <li>- piaffe only slightly indicated</li> <li>- extreme crooked and against the Athlete's aids</li> </ul>	1, 2 or 3 (depending on severity)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- losing regularity throughout, diagonals visibly breaking up</li> <li>- Horse breaks piaffe after a few steps, canters or walks</li> <li>- interruption with momentary standstill</li> <li>- clearly moving too much forwards (~ 4 m+ = half steps)</li> <li>- several clear steps back</li> <li>- showing only ~ 50% of required number of steps</li> <li>- extreme lack of straightness, against Athlete's aids</li> </ul>	Below 5 (lower depending on severity of problem)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- some loss of regularity, diagonals not always recognisable</li> <li>- moving too much forwards (~ 3 metres +)</li> <li>- a few clear steps back</li> <li>- showing clearly not enough steps (~ 30-40 % less)</li> <li>- strong balancing from side to side</li> <li>- extreme swinging or permanent clear crossing with front- or hind legs</li> <li>- crossing and toe-stepping/ hoof-stepping <b>throughout</b></li> <li>- extreme bracing against front legs, base becomes very wide, Horse thereby avoiding to take weight on hind legs</li> </ul>	5 or below
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- not quite enough piaffe steps</li> <li>- momentary loss of forward tendency</li> </ul>	Deduction of 1 p., (depending on severity of problem)

**Additional Considerations:**

**PIAFFE in Intermediate A, Intermediate B and Intermediate II:**

Absolutely regular, highly expressive piaffe steps that are allowed to travel forwards one (1) metre in Inter II or two (2) metres in Inter A/B can be rewarded with a (very) high mark/ the maximum score.

If the piaffe is shown 'more or less in place' as in the GP, and is performed in an 'excellent' way, Judges should be prepared to give the maximum score as the Guidelines only state that it is **allowed** to advance for up to one (1)/ two (2) metres, not state that the piaffe '**must**' advance one (1)/ two (2) metres.

**PIAFFE PIROUETTE:**

A piaffe pirouette is judged as a piaffe. It can be shown in many ways: from 90° - 360°, or as a fan with changes of direction. A piaffe pirouette which is not correctly executed should not be regarded as a difficulty.

More than 360° in one direction is not recommended in a well-balanced choreography.

Correct execution:

- As for piaffe,
- The Horse turns around the inside hind leg, radius as small as possible, not more than ½ m,
- Maintenance of same level of activity and elasticity of back and steps,
- Very slight flexion/bend to the direction of the movement required,
- If possible, a ¼ or ½ piaffe pirouette should be shown to both sides to prove the Horse is well trained.

Problem:	Mark
- see mistakes in piaffe	Same as for piaffe
- clearly breaking piaffe - stepping some steps backwards - stepping too much forward - stepping very wide or out avoiding to take weight - very large (~ 2 - 3m) - turning around the middle	5 or below

## **PASSAGE:**

Problem:	Mark
- severe resistance and disobedience throughout - recognisable only for a short part - breaking passage for several steps - completely irregular throughout - no collection shown, just slow trot	1, 2 or 3 (depending on severity)
- insufficiently regular, breaking passage for some steps - trot like, lacking cadence (throughout) - almost walking behind - distance of passage is much too short (only approx. 50%)	Below 5 (lower depending on severity of problem)
- several uneven steps behind or in front - several steps with double beat - significant swaying in shoulders or hindquarters - crossing front or hind legs throughout - hind legs too far out behind, so transitions to piaffe are negatively influenced	5.5 and below

## **Additional Considerations:**

The mark for a passage, that is clearly shorter than the required distance (e.g. after a resistance) should be appropriately diminished. A passage shown over not more than 50% of the required distance cannot be seen as sufficient and has to lead to a mark below 5.

## **PASSAGE HALF PASS:**

A half pass in passage is judged as passage. It can be shown as single half passes in one direction or as a zig-zag.

It should be executed at least 5m sideways to make it recognizable. A passage half pass which

is not correctly executed should not be regarded as a difficulty.

Correct execution:

- As for passage,
- Slight but uniform flexion/ bend, slightly crossing legs,
- If possible, a half pass in passage should be shown equally to both sides.

<b>Problem:</b>	<b>Mark</b>
See mistakes in passage	same as for passage
- wrong flexion/bend	5.5 or below depending on severity of problem

### **PASSAGE-PIAFFE-PASSAGE TRANSITIONS:**

<b>Problem:</b>	<b>Mark</b>
- severe resistance, disobedience throughout - both transitions into and out of piaffe fail	1, 2 or 3 (depending on severity)
- lack of obedience, e.g. one transition fails - very irregular steps, breaking into canter or walk in 1 trans - very undefined, too long (over distance of ~ 5+ metres) - very crooked	Below 5 (lower depending on severity of problem)
- undefined, coming from a 'half steps piaffe' - some loss of rhythm/regularity in one transition	5.5 or below

### **Additional Considerations:**

Watch the passage-piaffe-passage transitions in connection with piaffe or passage:

- Generally speaking, one must see the passage - piaffe - passage transitions in connection with piaffe and passage: A badly sitting piaffe cannot suddenly lead to a highly collected, good transition. Therefore, as a rule, the mark for transition should not be significantly higher than the mark for piaffe and passage.

Exception: The Horse shows after a correct passage a piaffe, which starts well, is then broken by a resistance and at the end is shown again in rhythm. In this case, the mark for the transition can be significantly higher than the mark for the piaffe.

- If a piaffe is moving too much forwards or not showing enough steps, the transition is not clearly defined and cannot be more than max. one (1) point higher than the piaffe.
- Imprecise riding can lead to multiple deductions of points: e.g. a piaffe is clearly not shown at the marker prescribed (→ deduction of points), the transition is also not where it belongs (→ deduction) and the subsequent passage is clearly too short (→ deduction).
- The transition canter – passage must come clearly out of passage.
- If the Horse loses the last passage on the centre line, the mark for the halt has also to be affected as there is no transition passage - halt (see below).

**OTHER TRANSITIONS:**

<b>Problem:</b>	<b>Mark</b>
<b>Transition walk – passage/ walk - canter</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- severe resistance, disobedience and crookedness throughout</li> <li>- unsuccessful attempt, passage to canter is only executed after ~ 10 - 15 m</li> <li>- transition to passage or canter from a mainly lateral walk</li> <li>- transition to passage or canter from a jogging walk</li> </ul>	1, 2 or 3 (depending on severity)  Deduction of 1 p., (depending on severity of problem but max 5.5)
<b>Transition passage - extended trot - passage</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- one (1) transition fails (e.g. Horse breaks into canter)</li> </ul>	5 or below depending on how fast it is corrected
<b>Transition passage – halt</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Horse breaks clearly passage some metres (5-10 m) before final halt</li> </ul>	Mark for passage: 5 or below Mark for halt: Deduction of 1 - 2 p.
<b>Transition canter – trot incl. collected trot M – R</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- transition fails, almost no collected trot M - R shown</li> <li>- transition not on aids and only some metres of trot shown</li> <li>- Horse clearly counter flexed</li> </ul>	1, 2, 3 4 or below  Deduction of 1 - 2 p.

**GIVE AND RETAKE THE REINS:**

In the movement "give and retake the reins" a clear release of the contact must be shown, if the Athlete visibly keeps the contact, it has to be marked 5 or below.

**LET THE HORSE STRETCH ON A LONG REIN:**

If there is no visible lengthening and stretching of the frame in a forwards-downwards direction, the score must be 5 or below. Take care to observe whether the Athlete retakes the reins smoothly, without any resistance from the Horse and without the Horse losing rhythm and balance. A light contact should always be maintained.

**GENERALLY IMPORTANT:**

It must be noted that the Athlete is only allowed to have one attempt at any of the movements, i.e. circling away in a case of resistance in order to make a 2<sup>nd</sup> attempt is not allowed and will be penalized by giving an error of course.

**Only the score for the 1<sup>st</sup> attempt will count.**

Transitions out of a 2<sup>nd</sup> attempt movement, e.g. out of a piaffe cannot be considered. Even if the 1<sup>st</sup> transition has been shown correctly, the overall mark for the transitions has to be very low.



## **DIRECTIVES FOR JUDGES - FEI FREESTYLE TESTS**

### **Technical Marks:**

The mark for the technical execution depends only on the quality of performing the compulsory movements of the test. Scoring is as in standard tests. The judge gives a full or half mark for each single movement shown. If the Athlete performs a movement several times, the judge has to give several single marks, which then will be averaged by the judge to a final mark for this movement at the end of the performance.

The total for the technical execution is found by adding the final marks for each movement (multiplied by their coefficients) divided by the number of movements and coefficients. Deductions in the case of mistakes see below.

### **Artistic Marks:**

The five artistic marks are scored by full, half or decimal marks and multiplied by their coefficients:

1. Rhythm, Energy and Elasticity,
2. Harmony between Athlete and Horse,
3. Choreography,
4. Degree of Difficulty,
5. Music and Interpretation of the Music.

The total for the artistic performance is found by adding the five final marks, multiplied by their coefficients.

All artistic marks are more or less depending on the quality of the technical execution. It is especially important that the artistic marks for

1. Rhythm, Energy and Elasticity,
2. Harmony between Athlete and Horse and,
4. Degree of Difficulty (DoD).

should correlate with the technical score.

That means if a Freestyle shows a high degree of difficulty but the technical execution is incorrect, especially the marks for harmony and DoD have to be lowered.

On the other side, if the quality of the execution is high but the degree of difficulty is low, the DoD mark cannot be increased significantly.

Also, the marks for

3. Choreography and,
5. Interpretation of Music.

can be negatively influenced in cases of resistance, disobedience and disturbance.

**Deductions** from the Artistic Mark:

**Time:** In the case of a Freestyle test being clearly above or below the required time limit there will be a deduction of 0.5% (percentage points) from the total of the artistic score.

Slight failure to perform within the given time (approx. 10 sec.) should be treated generously without a deduction of marks, especially if unusual circumstances (such as external distractions or bad conditions of the ground) occur.

**Errors:** For all kinds of technical failure or errors see FEI Dressage Rules, Art. 419, 420.

**Music:** If it does not match the paces, transitions or the final salute, the mark for music has to be reduced.

Further deductions in the case of omissions or a wrong execution see below.

### **Execution of Movements:**

Entrance and **Halts:**

The first and the last halt and salute have to be shown on the centre line in the direction of C. Mistakes before the first salute have to be considered.

**Walk:**

Each walk should be shown 20 m **consecutively** on a straight or curved line.

½ walk pirouettes (180°) may be embedded into the collected walk.

Shoulder-in/ leg-yielding in walk are additionally allowed but do not replace the required 20 m collected walk.

**½ Walk pirouettes:**

½ walk pirouettes have to come from collected walk and lead to collected walk. Otherwise it is a turn on the haunches. ½ walk pirouettes have to be shown with an angle of 180°.

**Volte:**

The compulsory volte in canter (Pony Riders FS) has to be shown in true canter, not in counter canter! If left out or shown in counter canter **as only execution**, the mark for volte/ collected canter has to be < 5.

**Lateral Work:**

- Shoulder-In is required in collected trot and over a distance of 12 m.
- Half passes in trot should be shown at least 5 m to each side to make them count as compulsory movement.
- Trot: Counter changes of hand (Zig-zag half passes) in trot are always allowed.
- Canter: Only one counter change of hand in canter is allowed for Juniors.
- Counter changes of hand (Zig-zags) in canter are allowed starting from Young Riders' Freestyle.
- Mistakes: A mistake in a flying change directly at the end of a half pass reduces the mark for the half pass itself (except in JUN FS where every change has a mark of its own).
- The angles of half passes are at the Athlete's discretion. However, half passes shown below the steepness of the relevant standard tests, will be regarded as very easy.

- Travers and renvers are allowed as additional part of the choreography but do not substitute the requested half passes.

### **Extensions:**

- For Welfare reasons, extended trot should only be shown on a straight line. A very slight curve (e.g. a loop along the long side) is allowed.
- Extended trot on the circle line or through 2 corners is only regarded as medium trot. If shown on a strongly curved line **as only execution**, the technical mark has to be < 5 and the marks for choreography and DoD cannot be higher than 5,5.
- Extended trot on a short diagonal is allowed.
- Extended canter is permitted on a curved line/ circle line.
- A transition from extended trot into halt should not be shown too abrupt but rather fading into the halt (Welfare of the Horse!).
- An incorrect flying change in the transition back from extended canter reduces the mark for the extended canter (except in JUN Freestyle where every change has a mark of its own).

### **Canter pirouettes:**

Canter pirouettes (half, full, max. 2x) must be shown at least 1 x to each side from collected canter to collected canter, according to the requirements of the class.

- Canter pirouettes performed from/into halt, walk or piaffe are only counted if in addition to a correct pirouette to the same side (from and into canter). If they are the only ones shown to one side, the technical mark for the pirouette to this side has to be below 5 and the marks for choreography and DoD cannot be higher than 5.5.
- Double pirouettes should be judged as one movement and not given the average mark of the two single pirouettes.
- A combination of pirouettes left/right should at least have 3-4 canter strides in between.

**Piaffe;** must be shown at least once, with a min. of 10 steps straight.

**Piaffe pirouettes:** only count in addition to a compulsory piaffe and are scored as a piaffe, each time shown. Piaffe pirouettes can be shown in many ways: from 90° - 360°, or as a fan with changes of direction. More than 360° to one side is not recommended in a well-balanced choreography.

**Passage** must be shown at least once, min. 15 m on a straight or curved line.

**Passage half passes** only count in addition to a compulsory passage and are scored as a passage, each time shown. They can be shown as single half passes in one direction or as a Zig-zag. They should be executed at least 5 m sideways to make them recognizable and ideally shown to both sides.

**Piaffe pirouettes** and **half passes in passage** can only be counted as a difficulty if well executed (7 or above).

**Passage - Piaffe - Passage Transitions:** These transitions only count when shown as passage - piaffe - passage transitions. The transition from passage or passage half pass into a (½) piaffe pirouette and back to passage or passage half pass counts as a transition.

## **Deductions in the case of omissions or of an execution not according to the Rules**

**I. Omissions** (No mark possible for the technical execution).

### **Omissions:**

If a compulsory movement has been left out completely and **deliberately** the judge has to give a zero (**0**) for this movement.

The scores for both, choreography and DoD cannot be higher than **max. 5,5**.

It is up to the judge to go further down with these two marks if more than one movement has been left out.

**II. Movements of a Higher Class** (= a movement that is not mentioned in the test sheet):

If a competitor **deliberately** shows movements of a higher class (= not mentioned in the test sheet!), no mark for the technical execution of that movement is possible.

The scores for both, choreography and degree of difficulty, cannot be higher than **max. 5,5**.

It is up to the judge to go further down with these two marks if more than one movement of a higher class has **deliberately** been shown.

The Horse/Athlete combination will not be eliminated anymore for showing a movement of a higher class.

Examples for movements of a higher class (**if deliberately executed**):

**Pony Riders:** Flying changes, canter half passes, canter pirouettes, piaffe, passage...

**Juniors:** Canter pirouettes, piaffe, passage...

**Young Riders:** Flying changes in sequences of two tempi and/or one tempi, piaffe, passage...

**Intermediate I:** Flying changes shown as one tempi changes, piaffe, passage...

**Grand Prix:** Airs above the ground...

The judge should always pay attention to whether the requirements were exceeded intentionally or due to a mistake. If a pony shows a flying change in the counter canter, it shows a movement of a higher class, but it is very unlikely that this was the Athlete's intention.

**III: Execution not according to the Freestyle Rules:**

A movement required in the test sheet has been shown, but in the wrong way, which means a mark for the technical execution is possible, but has to be very low if the movement is executed incorrectly).

### **III a: Exceeding the requirements deliberately:**

If a compulsory movement has been shown **deliberately** (not as the result of a mistake!) above the requirements, the mark for the technical execution of that movement has to be **below 5**, regardless of this movement having also been shown correctly. No averaged marks are permitted.

The scores for both, choreography and DoD, cannot be higher than **max. 5,5**.

#### **Pony Riders:**

- **Clearly** more than a half-pirouette in walk (~ 270°).

#### **Juniors:**

- **Clearly** more than a half-pirouettes in walk (~ 270°).
- Flying changes in a sequence of 4 strides or less → final mark for all flying changes < 5
- More than one counter change of hand in canter → final mark for all canter half passes < 5

#### **Young Riders:**

- **Clearly** more than ½ pirouette in canter (~ 270°) → final mark for all pirouettes to this side < 5

#### **Intermediate I:**

- **Clearly** more than a full pirouette in canter (>360°) → final mark for all pirouettes to this side < 5

#### **Intermediate A/B:**

- **Clearly** more than a full pirouette in canter (> 360°) → final mark for all pirouettes to this side < 5
- Piaffe pirouette in addition to a straight piaffe → final mark for the piaffe < 5
- Passage half pass in addition to a straight passage → final mark for the passage < 5

#### **Grand Prix:**

- **Clearly** more than a double pirouette in canter (two pirouettes of > 360° each, in one continuous movement) → final mark for all pirouettes to this side < 5

### **III b: Execution not as required in the Rules**

If a compulsory movement has been shown **deliberately** (not as the result of a mistake!) other than required without having been shown correctly at least once, the mark for the technical execution of that movement has to be **below 5**.

The scores for both, choreography and DoD, cannot be higher than **max. 5,5**.

These movements are additionally allowed.

#### **Paces:**

- Walk not shown on straight or curved lines but performed clearly as a lateral movement (e.g. as a shoulder-in or leg-yielding **as only execution**).
- Extended trot shown on a circle line or through two corners **as only execution**.
- Collected canter without showing 8 m volte (Pony Riders Freestyle).

#### **Movements:**

- Piaffe **only** shown as a pirouette → final mark for all piaffes < 5
- Passage **only** shown as a half pass → final mark for all passage sequences < 5

### **III c: Execution below the requirements:**

If a compulsory movement has been shown **deliberately** (not as the result of a mistake!) and significantly below the requirements and without having been shown correctly at least once, the mark for the technical execution of that movement has to be **below 5**.

The scores for both, choreography and DoD, have to be appropriately diminished (!).

These movements are additionally allowed.

- **Clearly** less (~ 30 - 40%) than 20 m collected or extended walk **consecutively**.
- **Clearly** less (~ 30 - 40%) than 1 x 15 m passage.
- **Clearly** less than 1 x 10 straight steps piaffe.
- Half instead of full pirouette.
- **Deliberately** not enough changes in a series (not as a result of a mistake).

Not being able to show the required number of changes as a result of a mistake or resistance of the Horse will lead to a technical mark < 5 but will not automatically reduce the marks for choreography and DoD but can reduce the mark for harmony.

### **IV: Mistakes of the Athlete**

If the Athlete tries to influence the public with his hands the **Harmony** Mark should be reduced by **0,5 p**. The judge has to deduct **1,0 p**. in cases when the Athlete tries to influence the public with his hands more frequently.

The movements concerned should be technically judged as usual unless the Athlete influences the Horse with his hands. This should lead in addition to an insufficient technical score for the respective movement(s).

## MARKING OF OMISSIONS AND INCORRECT EXECUTIONS IN FREESTYLE TESTS

	<b>HANDOUT FOR MARKING OF OMISSIONS AND INCORRECT EXECUTIONS IN FREESTYLE TESTS</b>				
	Acc. to: Directives for Judges - FEI Freestyle Tests				
	For all kinds of errors please refer to the FEI Dressage Rules.				
	Clearly above/below required time limit: Deduction of 0.5 percentage points from total of Artistic Score				
	Technical marks: Half marks (0.5); Artistic Marks: Decimals (0.1) may be used				
			Final technic. mark	Choreo.	D. of Diff.
I.	<u>Deliberate</u> (!) <b>OMISSION</b> of a compulsory movement		0	max. 5.5	max. 5.5
II.	Showing <u>deliberately</u> a movement of a <b>HIGHER CLASS</b> Example: 2 tempi changes in a Young Riders Freestyle		No mark possible	max. 5.5	max. 5.5
	NO ELIMINATION ANYMORE		(no box on sheet)		
III.	<b>INCORRECT EXECUTIONS</b>				
III a.	<b>EXCEEDING</b> requirements <u>deliberately</u>		Below 5	max. 5.5	max. 5.5
	<b>Regardless of any other correct execution (!) Example: Full pirouette in a Young Riders Freestyle</b>		<b>no average mark</b>	max. 5.5	max. 5.5
III b.	Execution <u>deliberately</u> <b>NOT ACCORDING TO RULES</b>		Below 5	max. 5.5	max. 5.5
	<b>Applies only if movement has not been shown correctly at least 1x (!) Example: Piaffe only as a piaffe pirouette</b>				

III c.	Execution <u>deliberately</u> + <u>clearly</u> <b>BELOW REQUIREMENTS</b>		Below 5	diminished	diminished
	<b>Applies only if movemt/pace has not been shown correctly at least 1x (!)</b>				
	Examples: <u>clearly</u> less than 20 m walk consecutively				
	<u>Clearly</u> less than 15 m passage				
	Deliberately not enough changes in a required sequence				
	½ pirouette instead of required full pirouette				
<b>Pony Riders</b>	½ walk pirouette embedded in collected walk	allowed			
	Serpentine in trot and/or canter	allowed			
	Zig-zags in trot	allowed			
	Travers/renvers (do not replace half passes)	allowed			
	Double-volte in trot and/or canter	allowed			
	<b>The compulsory 8m canter volte must be shown in true canter, otherwise below 5</b>				
II.	Examples f. movemts of a <b>HIGHER CLASS</b> - if <u>deliberately</u> shown:		No mark possible		
	Fly. change, canter half pass., canter pir., piaffe, passage		(no box on sheet)	max. 5.5	max. 5.5
III a.	<b>EXCEEDING</b> requirements <u>deliberately</u> :				
	<b>Regardless of any other correct execution (!)</b>				
	<u>Clearly</u> more than ½ pirouette in walk (~ 270° and more)		Below 5	max. 5.5	max. 5.5
III b.	Execution <u>deliberately</u> <b>NOT ACCORDING TO RULES:</b>				
	<b>Applies only if movemt/pace has not been shown correctly at least 1x (!)</b>				
	Walk executed on 2 tracks (as shoulder-in/leg-yielding)		Below 5	max. 5.5	max. 5.5
	Extended trot only on circle line or through 2 corners		Below 5	max. 5.5	max. 5.5



	Collected canter without compulsory volte in true canter		Below 5	max. 5.5	max. 5.5
<b>Juniors</b>	Flying changes in a series of 5 and more	allowed			
	Canter half passes with 1 counter change of hand	allowed			
II.	Examples for movements of a <b>HIGHER CLASS</b> - if <u>deliberately</u> shown:		No mark possible		
	Canter pirouette, piaffe, passage		(no box on sheet)	max. 5.5	max. 5.5
III a.	<b>EXCEEDING</b> requirements <u>deliberately</u> :				
	<b>Regardless of any other correct execution (!)</b>				
	<u>Clearly</u> more than ½ pirouette in walk (~ 270° and more)		Below 5	max. 5.5	max. 5.5
	Flying changes in a sequence of 4 and less:				
	> Final mark for all flying changes left and right		Below 5	max. 5.5	max. 5.5
	Half passes in canter w. more than 1 counter change				
	> Final mark for all half passes left and right		Below 5	max. 5.5	max. 5.5
III b.	Execution <u>deliberately</u> <b>NOT ACCORDING TO RULES:</b>				
	<b>Applies only if movemt/pace has not been shown correctly at least 1x (!)</b>				
	Walk executed on 2 tracks (as shoulder-in/leg-yielding)		Below 5	max. 5.5	max. 5.5
	Extended trot only on circle line or through 2 corners		Below 5	max. 5.5	max. 5.5
<b>Young Riders</b>	Zig-zags in canter	allowed	Final technic. mark	Choreo.	D. of Diff.
	Combination half pass - ½ canter pirouette	allowed			
	½ canter pir. from/to halt, walk, <u>in addition to requir. pir.</u>	allowed			
II.	Examples for movements of a HIGHER CLASS - if <u>deliberately</u> shown:		No mark possible		
	Fly. changes in sequence of 2 and/or 1 tempi, piaffe, passage		(no box on sheet)	max. 5.5	max. 5.5

III a.	<b>EXCEEDING</b> requirements <u>deliberately:</u>				
	<b>Regardless of any other correct execution (!)</b>				
	<u>Clearly</u> more than ½ pirouette in canter(~ 270° and more)		Below 5	max. 5.5	max. 5.5
II.2.	Execution <u>deliberately</u> <b>NOT ACCORDING TO RULES:</b>				
	<b>Applies only if movemt/pace has not been shown correctly at least 1x (!)</b>				
	½ canter pirouette not min. 1x from and into canter to each side		Below 5	max. 5.5	max. 5.5
	Execution of walk/ extended trot: see JUN				
<b>Inter I</b>	Combination half pass - canter pirouette	allowed			
	Canter pir. from/to halt, walk, <u>in addition to required pir.</u>	allowed			
II.	Examples for movements of a <b>HIGHER CLASS</b> - if <u>deliberately</u> shown:		No mark possible		
	Fly. changes in sequence of 1 tempi, piaffe, passage		(no box on sheet)	max. 5.5	max. 5.5
III a.	<b>EXCEEDING</b> requirements <u>deliberately:</u>				
	<b>Regardless of any other correct execution (!)</b>				
	<u>Clearly</u> more than a full (360°) pirouette in canter		Below 5	max. 5.5	max. 5.5
III b.	Execution <u>deliberately</u> <b>NOT ACCORDING TO RULES:</b>				
	<b>Applies only if movemt/pace has not been shown correctly at least 1x (!)</b>				
	Full canter pirouette not min. 1x from and into canter to each side		Below 5	max. 5.5	max. 5.5
	Execution of walk/ extended trot: see JUN				

III c.	Execution <u>deliberately + clearly</u> <b>BELOW REQUIREMENTS</b>				
	<b>Applies only if movemnt has not been shown correctly at least 1x (!)</b>				
	½ (180°) instead of full (360°) pirouette in canter		Below 5	appropr.	diminished
	Deliberately not enough changes in a required sequence		Below 5	appropr.	diminished
<b>Inter A/B</b>	<b>EXCEEDING</b> requirements <u>deliberately:</u>				
	Piaffe pirouette in addition to a straight piaffe 10 steps	not allowed	Below 5	max. 5.5	max. 5.5
	Passage half pass in addition to a straight passage 15m	not allowed	Below 5	max. 5.5	max. 5.5
	<u>Clearly</u> more than a full (360°) pirouette in canter	not allowed	Below 5	max. 5.5	max. 5.5
<b>Grand Prix</b>	Piaffe pirouette in addition to a straight piaffe 10 steps	allowed	judged as piaffe		
	Passage half pass in addition to a straight passage 15 m	allowed	judged as passage		
	Canter pirouettes max. 2x 360° continuously	allowed	judged as 1 movemnt.		
	Canter pir. from/to halt, walk, <u>in addition to required pir.</u>	allowed	judged as pirouette		
	Combination half pass - canter pirouette (max. 2x)	allowed			
III a.	<b>EXCEEDING</b> requirements <u>deliberately:</u>				
	<b>Regardless of any other correct execution (!)</b>				
	<u>Clearly</u> more than a double (2x 360°) pirouette in canter		Below 5	max. 5.5	max. 5.5
III b.	Execution <u>deliberately</u> <b>NOT ACCORDING TO RULES</b>				
	<b>Applies only if movemnt/pace has not been shown correctly at least 1x (!)</b>				
	Piaffe <u>only</u> shown as a piaffe pirouette		Below 5	max. 5.5	max. 5.5
	Passage <u>only</u> shown as a passage half pass		Below 5	max. 5.5	max. 5.5

	Full canter pirouette not min. 1x from/into canter		Below 5	max. 5.5	max. 5.5
	Execution of walk/extended trot: see JUN				
III c.	Execution <u>deliberately + clearly</u> <b>BELOW REQUIREMENTS</b>				
	<b>Applies only if movement has not been shown correctly at least 1x (!)</b>				
	½ (180°) instead of full (360°) pirouette in canter		Below 5	appropr.	diminished
	Deliberately not enough changes in a required sequence		Below 5	appropr.	diminished
<b>III.</b>	<b>MISTAKES OF ATHLETE</b>			<b>Harmony Mark</b>	
	Athlete influencing public with his hand			Deduction of 0.5- 1 p	
	Athlete influencing Horse with his hand		Below 5 f. movemt.	Deduction of 1 p	

## **ASSESSING THE DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY IN A FREESTYLE TEST**

### **1. Initial Comments**

The assessment of the degree of difficulty in a Freestyle test cannot be made separately from the other technical and artistic scores. There is a close connection between the degree of difficulty and the technical execution. Lack of quality in the execution of the movement is considered a deficit in the performance ability of Athlete and/or Horse. This must be taken into consideration as deductions in the degree of difficulty scoring.

The **basic requirements** of the Freestyle are achieved when the Athlete shows all compulsory movements listed in the test sheets for each level. The Athlete can increase the degree of difficulty and raise the score for his performance (when executed with technical correctness) by:

- Appropriate repetition of single exercises, especially the exercises with a coefficient.
- Exceeding the minimum requirements of the exercises, such as number of simple and flying tempi changes or piaffe steps, but without exaggeration.
- Showing a steeper angle than requested in half passes possibly combined with changes of direction
- Executing the movements on lines without the support of arena rails, such as on the inner track, the quarter or centre line, or on angled or curved lines, (e.g. circle or serpentine).
- Well-chosen placing of movements in positions that make their execution more difficult: for example directly in front of the arena rails, as well as pirouettes directed outwards, possibly towards the spectators.
- Well-presented clearly defined combinations of movements (e.g. half-passes in trot followed by half-passes in passage, flying changes every second stride immediately followed by changes every stride and vice versa).
- Showing demanding and difficult transitions (e.g. piaffe or passage derived from the halt without prior development of impulsion; transition from walk or halt directly into a series of flying changes; significant but still harmonious transitions out of an extended pace to a highly collected exercise: e.g. extended trot to piaffe or extended canter to (half) canter pirouette or piaffe.
- Performing movements or transitions with the reins in one hand but without exaggeration.

A **well-calculated** risk is demonstrated when the Degree of Difficulty corresponds to the potential and the level of training of Athlete and Horse. A challenging, technically correct performance is a significant testimony of a high standard of riding ability and the training of the Horse. On the other hand, obvious mistakes in the execution of the movements may reflect an over-asking by the Athlete of the Horse, which means a badly calculated risk, and the score for the Degree of Difficulty has to be reduced.

If the classical dressage cannot be presented as stated in the rules, it is absolutely necessary to react by reducing the mark for the Degree of Difficulty.

### **2. Guidelines for Scoring**

With special attention to the initial comments and the clarifications in the Guidelines for Judges, the recommended directives for points awarded for degree of difficulty are as follows:

- When only the minimum requirements for the basis level are fulfilled, approximately 6.0 - 6.5.
- When there is a rise in the degree of difficulty according to the level of the respective standard tests minimum of 7.0.
- For each movement with increased degree of difficulty (calculated risk) the score should rise accordingly.

## **DRESSAGE COMPETITIONS FOR CHILDREN**

*The FEI Rules for Dressage Events apply to all international Children Dressage events, except where stated differently below.*

### **1. General.**

Children may take part in FEI Dressage Competitions from the beginning of the year they reach the age of 12 until the end of the year they turn 14. Only outside Western Europe they may compete on ponies. To achieve this, the Judges will have different roles depending on where they sit around the arena.

Judges on the short side will be judging the technical aspect of the test, execution of the movements, flow of the test, effectiveness of the Athlete's aids whereas the Judges on the long side will be judging mainly the riding skills: Rider's position and seat, Effectiveness of aids, Precision, General impression.

### **2. FEI Children Dressage Tests.**

- FEI Children Preliminary A
  - FEI Children Preliminary B
  - FEI Children Team
  - FEI Children individual
- Except for the change of the coefficients, the Children Preliminary A, Team and Individual tests are essentially unchanged from the past.
  - The level of difficulty of Children Test Preliminary B is new.
  - The Judges on the long side will have to complete a specific Marking Sheet:

### **3. Judging System of Children Classes.**

Judges positions:

Panel of three (3) Judges:

- President + two (2) members,
- Technical Judging: One (1) Judge at C,
- Quality Judging: two (2) Judges sitting together preferably\* at E.

Panel of five (5) Judges (FEI Championships)

- President + four (4) members,
- Technical Judging: three (3) Judges, one at C, one at H and one at B,
- Quality Judging: two (2) Judges sitting together at E.

\* This would be the preferred seating. In case the set-up of the arena does not allow the quality marking judges to sit at E, they may sit at B.

The Judges on the long side will have to complete a specific Marking Sheet:

**Children Quality Marking Sheet - including directives**

<b>Assessment of individual tasks</b>	<b>Commentary</b>	<b>Mark</b>
<b>Rider's position and seat.</b> Seat: well balanced, elastic, in centre of saddle, absorbing movements of horse. Correct position of upper body, arm, elbow, hand, leg, heel.		
<b>Effectiveness of aids.</b> Influence of the aids on presentation of horse accord. to 'Scale of Training'. Influence of aids on correct presentation of movements/ paces. Sensitive use of aids. Independence of rider's seat		
<b>Precision</b> Preparation of movements. Accuracy of execution of figures.  Execution of movements at markers prescribed. Maintenance of correct tempo.		
<b>General impression</b> Harmony of presentation. Correctness of paces. Ability to present the horse favourably.		
Total marks (max 40)		
Divided by 4 = Total Quality Score		
Quality Score in %		

The FEI Dressage Children test sheets can be found [here](#).

**Marks.**

- As in other Dressage tests, decimals may be used for the quality marks only.
- Error of course/ error of execution: deduction of 0.5% from the total score for the first error; 1% deduction for the 2<sup>nd</sup> error; elimination for the 3<sup>rd</sup> error.
- Penalty percentage points have to be deducted from both judging procedures (technical judges and quality judges).
- The final score calculation will be made as follow:

Technical score in %:		
Quality score in %:		
TOTAL score in %: (Technical plus Quality divided by two)		
<b>To be deducted / penalty points</b> 1st error of course : 0.5 percentage point 2nd error of course : 1.0 percentage point 3rd error of course : Elimination		
<b>FINAL SCORE in % :</b>		

## **Scoring:**

### Technical mark scoring:

- The Judge or Judges scoring the technical mark each give an individual score.
- At Championships, when three (3) Judges give the technical marks, the scores of each judge are added and divided by 3 to determine the final average technical % score.

### Quality mark scoring:

- The two (2) Judges, sitting together at E\*, have to discuss the four (4) criteria and come to four (4) agreed marks for seat, aids, precision and General impression.
- The four (4) marks are added and divided by 4 to determine the final mark in %.

- **The Final score:**

#### Panel of three (3) Judges:

The final score is determined by adding the technical score in % (Judge at C) and the quality score in % (score at E) divided by 2.

#### Panel of five (5) Judges (FEI Championships)

The final score is determined by adding the average technical score in % (average of three (3) Judges) and the quality score in % (score at E) divided by 2.

## **1. Individual Classification:**

In all Competitions the winner is the Athlete having obtained the highest total percentage, the second placed Athlete is the one with the next highest total and so on.

## **2. Ties at CDICH.**

Ties are not broken at CDICH events, combinations are placed equally.

## **3. Ties at CDI Os and FEI Championships.**

In case of equality of percentage for the first three (3) places, the following system must be used to break the tie:

- The "technical" mark will be used; the Athlete/Horse combination with the higher "technical" mark will be ranked highest.
- If still tied, the highest total median score of the three (3) Technical Judges will decide the placing.
- If still tied, the combinations will be placed equally.



## **JUDGING THE "QUALITY OF RIDING" MARK IN CHILDREN COMPETITIONS**

The purpose of these Guidelines is to enable judges to understand the four different criteria of the "quality of riding mark" judges give when judging jointly the performances from the long side:

1. Rider's Position and Seat,
2. Effectiveness of Aids,
3. Precision,
4. General Impression,

and to show them how to use these criteria in Children competitions. They are not intended to be all-inclusive or to contain absolute rules.

Children competitions must be assessed with the focus on the Athlete's seat, the aids and the precision and effectiveness of his riding. The quality of the Horse should have no influence on the marks as long as the Athlete's seat and the use of his aids are not seen as having a negative effect on the Horse's paces. Only in the mark for General Impression, where the overall picture is assessed, the quality of the Horse might have a small impact.

The judge should not hesitate to give very high marks when appropriate. Similar to when judging competitions for 7-year-old Horses, the mark for the technical assessment and the "quality of riding mark" may differ.

In the following, the different criteria and possible mistakes are described and proposals for the scoring are given. Please, be aware that some criteria might overlap or one is the consequence of the other, e.g. a well-defined, fluent transition, clearly at the marker, will be the consequence of both: the correct use of the aids as well as of precision in riding.

In these Guidelines, the use of the masculine shall be interpreted to also include the feminine form.

### **RIDER'S POSITION AND SEAT:**

*Many descriptions, mainly to the Athlete's seat, were taken from the US "Guidelines for Judging Dressage Seat Equitation Competitions".*

What to assess?

The picture of the Athlete's seat (head, shoulder, upper body, hips and back, arms and hands, legs and heels) and his body language (good upper body control, elastic vs. stiff or loose or unsteady seat) must be compared to the requirements of a good, well-balanced seat. The judge should not be influenced by the body shape of the Athlete.

#### Seat:

- Well balanced, naturally elastic, sitting in centre/deepest part of saddle, smoothly absorbing, the movements of the horse,
- Correct position of upper body, tall and supple,
- Shoulders balanced over hips,
- Head carried over shoulders with chin level,
- Ear, shoulder, hip, heel in vertical line to the ground.

#### Minor faults:

- Sitting slightly to one side, slightly before/behind the vertical,
- Slight stiffness of shoulders or back, rounded back, chin,
- Collapsed hip, slightly crooked,
- One shoulder higher or rotated against the direction the horse moves to,
- Chair seat (Stuhlsitz).

#### Major faults:

- Any of the above taken to extreme,
- Athlete bounces in the saddle, or totally sits against the movement of the horse.

#### Legs:

- Centred under body, steady and well stretched down with adequate angle of the knee joint,
- Heels to be the lowest point,
- Thigh rotated in; inside of calf lying close to and lightly on Horse's side.

#### Minor faults:

- Legs slightly unsteady, too much forward or back,
- Lifting of heel to give aid,
- Toe pointed out,
- Knee momentarily off saddle,
- Stirrups too short (use of leg is restricted) or too long (heel is pulled up),
- Loss of stirrup, immediately corrected.

#### Major faults:

- Any of above taken to extreme,
- Knee permanently pulled up and off saddle or knee overstretched,
- Lower legs gripping,
- Spur in Horse's side or constantly kicking into the horse,
- Loss of stirrup, not immediately corrected.

#### Hands and Arms:

- Soft fists, hands carried steadily close together with the thumb as highest point, not too high, keeping steady contact with horse's mouth,
- Upper arms hanging relaxed, in the vertical, elbows close to the body,
- Straight line from elbow through hand to Horse's mouth,
- Arms following motion of Horse's head and neck, maintaining elastic contact.

#### Minor faults:

- Hands slightly too high, too low, too wide apart, hands rotated, busy, not elastic, open fists, momentary loss of contact,
- Elbows too far back, elbows straight, not close to the body.

#### Major faults:

- Any of above taken to extreme,
- Hanging, jerking or pulling on mouth, hands constantly bouncing,
- Major rigidity or tension in arms and hands,

#### **Criteria for marking the position and seat:**

##### 9 - 10:

- Very good to excellent in all criteria. Outstanding basics. Athlete gives impression of being exceptionally effective and harmonious.

8 - 8.9:

- No major position flaw and very good basics. Athlete might have one of the minor flaws listed above to a minor degree.

7 - 7.9:

- Still a very positive picture. Athlete may have a few minor flaws, but they do not impede the correctness of the presentation and are not detrimental to the Horse.

6 - 6.9:

- Athlete has several minor position flaws that might spoil the general picture (e.g. hands somewhat too high, Athlete sitting slightly to one side, knee momentarily off saddle etc.)  
OR the Athlete sits generally correct with the exception of one basic mistake (e.g. too visible use of spurs, permanently poking the Horse).

5 - 5.9:

- The Athlete has several major position faults (e.g. sitting permanently to the outside, hands constantly pounding, unable to control the position of his legs etc.) and/or rides the Horse in a detrimental manner (e.g. hard hands, too much use of spurs, unable to absorb the movements of the Horse, bouncing in the saddle etc.).

< 5:

- Very hard hands permanently pulling on mouth, excessive use of spurs.

#### **EFFECTIVENESS of AIDS:**

- Influence of aids on presentation of the Horse acc. to the Scale of Training.
- Influence of aids on correct presentation of movements/paces.
- Sensitive use of aids.
- Independence of Athlete's seat.

#### What to assess?

1. Ability of the Athlete to influence his Horse positively and to present him correctly in regard to the Scale of Training. In Children competitions - other than in dressage competitions on higher levels - the focus lies mainly on suppleness, contact, straightness and balance (beginning collection).

The general quality of the Horse should be of minor importance.

Exception: Bad riding that makes the Horse lose its rhythm must reduce the mark.

2. Fulfilment of required movements being precise in transitions; preparation/completion of movements; geometry and figures.

3. Use of aids (sensitive vs. rough; imperceptible vs. very visible; accurate or poor timing of aids).

4. Independence of Athlete's seat.

5. Impression of a harmonious cooperation between Horse and Athlete.

#### Minor faults:

- Scale of Training not always maintained, e.g.
- momentary stiffening of the Horse,
- contact sometimes a little unsteady,
- more engagement of hind legs needed,
- Horse not always totally straight, etc.
- Athlete not able to execute movements for a "fairly good" mark or better,

- Aids sometimes too visible,
- Wrong lead, immediately corrected.

## Major faults:

- Horse not presented according to the Scale of Training, e.g.
- significant rhythm/balance problems due to incorrect riding,
- lack of suppleness: tight in back throughout,
- serious contact problems: against hand, neck pulled together, above the bit, nose line behind vertical, low poll, open mouth, tongue out to the side, etc.
- lack of impulsion: hind legs not engaged, paces not shown in correct tempo,
- very crooked, escaping with the quarters,
- not possible to show collection when required,
- serious mistakes in movements, paces, transitions,
- rough riding with very visible aids,
- seat not independent, Athlete hangs permanently on to the reins, clings with the legs,
- Wrong lead, not immediately corrected.

## Criteria for marking the effectiveness of the aids:

### 9 - 10:

- Horse presentation very good to excellent according to the Scale of Training with sensitive, imperceptible aids. No apparent effort of Athlete, impression of full harmony between Athlete and Horse.
- Potential of the Horse shown to its best.
- Precise fulfilment of all required movements, no faults.

### 8 - 8.9:

- Effectively presented in a very good, correct form according to the Scale of Training, but not as convincing as above AND
- No major faults, impression of a good cooperation between Athlete and Horse.

### 7 - 7.9:

- Horse is fairly obedient and mostly presented according to the Scale of Training.
- a few minor flaws or small mistakes in execution, however no basic mistakes, OR
- a good presentation with one major mistake (e.g. a wrong lead not immediately corrected).

### 6 - 6.9:

- Horse is obedient but shows some deficiencies according to the Scale of Training.
- several minor flaws or recognizable mistakes in execution, however no basic mistakes, OR
- a fairly good presentation with one major mistake (see above), OR
- strong and inappropriate use of spurs throughout.

### 5 - 5.9:

- Horse is not presented according to the Scale of Training.
- Some serious mistakes or resistance with the Athlete not finding a way to solve the problem.
- Too strong use of spurs.

### < 5:

- Horse is permanently off the aids.
- Riding with a very negative influence on the Horse and its performance.
- Excessive use of spurs.

## PRECISION:

- Preparation of movements.
- Accuracy of execution of figures.
- Execution of movements at markers prescribed.
- Maintenance of correct tempo.

What to assess?

1. The way the Athlete prepares the movements (e.g. shoulder fore vs. quarters leading, collection etc.).
2. Whether movements are executed accurately (e.g. size of ½ voltes, correct corners, serpentines etc.).
3. Whether movements are shown at the markers, on the lines prescribed.
4. Whether the Athlete shows/keeps the tempo required (e.g. working trot/canter vs. collected trot/canter).

Minor faults:

- Inaccurate beginning/ending of movements (e.g. Horse not straightened before corner after shoulder-in),
- Movements/ transitions shown slightly before/after the marker prescribed, not totally on required line,
- Corners slightly cut, serpentines with the Horse going too deep into the corners,
- Horse shown with slight outside flexion; slightly crooked before corners,
- Tempo not always maintained or not always shown correctly (e.g. working trot instead of collected trot),
- Patterns not correctly executed (e.g. ½ voltes or voltes too large/too small),
- Break of pace, wrong canter, changing canter, immediately corrected.

Major faults:

- Any of above taken to extreme,
- Many serious mistakes in the execution of movements, paces, transitions; significant resistance,
- Break of pace, wrong canter, changing canter, not immediately corrected.

Criteria for marking Precision:

9 - 10:

- All movements, transitions, corners and lines executed with very good to excellent precision (e.g. size of voltes, straightness of diagonal lines to markers prescribed, no. of steps in simple change ...), AND
- All movements and transitions very well prepared and completed, AND
- Maintaining the correct tempo throughout (e.g. difference between working and collected trot), AND
- No faults in execution of test.

8 - 8.9:

- All movements and transitions executed at markers prescribed, AND
- Good understanding of riding corners and correct lines, AND
- Movements and transitions well prepared and completed, AND
- Maintaining the correct tempo, AND
- No major faults, possibly a few minor flaws in execution of test.

7 - 7.9:

- Most of the movements executed more or less at markers prescribed,
- Mostly correct understanding of riding corners and lines,
- Most of the movements and transitions more or less well prepared and completed,
- Mostly maintaining the correct tempo,

- Some minor technical execution problems, OR generally very precise riding but with one major mistake in execution, immediately corrected.
- 6 - 6.9:
- Some basic technical problems that make it impossible to present the Horse in a more than just satisfactory way with regard to precision.
- 5 - 5.9:
- Some problems in technical riding make it impossible to show a precisely ridden, harmonious test.
- < 5:
- Many major faults in a detrimental manner (e.g. Horse breaks pace, no walk sequence in simple changes, stuck with both legs in turn on haunches, no halt during salute ...) and/or tension or resistance of the Horse have a very negative effect on the performance.

## **GENERAL IMPRESSION:**

- Harmony of presentation,
- Correctness of paces,
- Ability to present the horse favourably.

What to assess?

1. The lightness and ease of the presentation, free from any tension or serious basic or technical mistakes, as well as the harmonious partnership between Athlete and Horse.
2. This mark contains also the correctness of the paces. If the Athlete is having a detrimental effect on the paces, causing the Horse to have e.g. a lateral walk, a permanently unbalanced trot or unclear rhythm in canter, the presentation cannot get a high mark for the general impression whereas a very good, elastic Horse might positively influence this mark.
3. Whether the Athlete is able to present his Horse at its best which requires already a high degree of riding skills.

Minor faults:

- Minor flaws in any of the criteria mentioned above: seat, effectiveness of aids and precision,
- Slight technical mistakes, moments of tension,
- Walk not always in clear four beat, trot not always fully balanced, canter slightly unbalanced or unclear in rhythm,
- Athlete is not yet able to present all strong points of his Horse.

Major faults:

- Significant problems in any of the criteria mentioned above: seat, effectiveness of aids and precision,
- Many technical mistakes, significant tension,
- Walk ambling, trot not regular on both reins, canter too unbalanced or unclear, very difficult to control,
- Athlete has a detrimental effect on the Horse's paces and movements.

Criteria for marking the General Impression:

9 - 10:

- Very good to excellent in all criteria mentioned above, very good to excellent understanding of cooperation between Athlete and Horse, flawless presentation, Horse ridden to the best of its ability.

8 - 8.9:

- Fulfilling all criteria required in a very good/good way, very good/good partnership between Athlete and Horse, very correct presentation, Horse nearly ridden to the best of its ability.

7 - 7.9:

- Good cooperation between Athlete and Horse, minor technical problems.

6 - 6.9:

- Some basic problems and technical mistakes; the Athlete is not able to present his Horse in more than a just satisfactory way.

5 - 5.9:

- Several problems in all criteria mentioned above. Many basic and technical mistakes and/or some resistance of the Horse. The presentation lacks harmony.

< 5:

- Many significant problems in all criteria mentioned above. Many major faults and/or resistance.
- The Athlete has a negative effect on the performance. The presentation lacks harmony throughout.

## **COMPETITIONS FOR 5-, 6- AND 7-YEAR-OLD HORSES**

The FEI Rules for Dressage Events apply to all international Young Horse Dressage events.

The basic idea of the young Horse competitions is to introduce 5, 6 and 7-year-old Horses to dressage competitions to help them gain experience in the dressage arena and to give them the opportunity to compete against each other in the same level of test.

A primary concern is to evaluate the correct training of young dressage Horses, to encourage the development of national breeds and the interest in international competitions involving young Horses.

### **Dressage Tests:**

5-year-olds: FEI Preliminary Test for 5-year-old Horses.

FEI Dressage Test for 5-year-old Horses, Final.

6-year-olds: FEI Preliminary Test for 6-year-old Horses.

FEI Dressage Test for 6-year-old Horses, Final.

7-year-olds: FEI Preliminary test for 7-year-old Horses.

FEI Dressage test for 7-years-old Horses, Final.

4-year-olds: FEI Dressage Test for 4-year-old Horses to be used only at National events.

### **Dress:**

Refer to the Dressage Rules.

Protective headgear has to be worn at all times.

### **Saddlery:**

The tests for 5- and 6-year-old Horses are required to be ridden in a snaffle. The test for 7-year-old Horses can be ridden in a snaffle or a double bridle. Bits and nosebands are according to the Dressage Rules. Bandages and whips are not allowed during the test.

## **1. Principles of Judging Young Horse Competitions**

While judging Young Horse Competitions three aspects are most important:

- The paces,
- The standard of training,
- The general impression and perspective including the conformation, the temperament and the natural talent to become a high-class dressage Horse.

The basic paces, handiness, rideability, the correctness of training and the perspective of the Horse as a Dressage Horse will be judged.

Judges should ask:

- whether or not the performance of the Horse corresponds to the general idea of a



- dressage Horse,
- whether the Horse is on the correct training path,
  - whether the Horse has the ability to perform Dressage at a high level.

### **Paces**

The paces have to be judged uncompromisingly as they are vitally important for the quality of a dressage Horse. They must be of absolute regularity without tension. The impulsion of the paces should be developed from the hindquarters through a swinging back with active hind legs. The steps and strides must be elastic with the Horse showing a natural self-carriage and freedom of the shoulder.

The quality of the paces is judged by assessing the overall impression, the regularity and elasticity of the steps and by the ability to maintain the same rhythm and natural balance, even after a transition within the paces or from one pace to another.

### **Standard of Training**

Equally important as the paces is the correct training according to the age of the Horse. The judges should assess whether or not the Horse's training corresponds to the principles of the training scale. Special emphasis has to be made regarding a soft and steady contact with a gently chewing mouth and an elastic poll. The poll should be the highest point and the neck should be without any restriction. Lateral flexion and bend must be equally developed to both sides. The Horse must be supple and obedient.

Natural ability to self-carry is asked for but is relative to the age of the Horse. In competitions for 5-year-old Horses only the beginning of collection, the "willingness to collect" is required. For the 6-year-old Horses, a more clearly defined collection, the "ability to collect" is necessary. The 7-year-old Horses need to show collection inherent to this level, ability to carry weight and lightness of forehand. A 7-year-old Horse needs to be through the back and in self carriage with a steady contact showing a good balance and correct bend.

The most important criteria for lateral movements and flying changes in Young Horse Tests are the fluency and the correct execution (see minor mistakes).

When judging the tests for 5-, 6- and 7-year-old-Horses the judges have to differentiate between minor mistakes, which are not a significant factor in the score, and fundamental mistakes, which generally lead to lower marks.

### **Minor mistakes**

Minor mistakes should be judged leniently, if, in principle, the Horse is demonstrating correct training with well-developed paces.

Horses which at the beginning of the test show tension and some concentration lapses or which may even be a bit spooky, should be judged more benevolently than in other international Dressage competitions.

### **Minor mistakes for 5-year-old Horses**

- Moments of tension at the beginning of the test with slight concentration lapses but improving throughout the test,
- Halt not completely attentive or straight,
- Transitions not exactly at the markers,
- Slight and momentary crookedness,
- Canter wrong lead, but immediately corrected,
- Short break of pace e.g. falling into trot during canter work but immediately corrected,
- Simple change of leg with 2 or 6 steps of walk in between instead of 3-5 steps.

### Minor mistakes for 6-year-old Horses

- Starting/ending the lateral movement not exactly at the required marker, slightly losing the bend for a short moment,
- Losing the bend at the end of the lateral movement,
- Flying change not exactly at the required marker, slightly swaying, not totally balanced.

### Minor mistakes for 7-year-old Horses

- Slightly swaying, not totally balanced in series of changes, must be straight in single change,
- Momentary loss of balance in canter pirouettes.

### **Fundamental mistakes**

Fundamental mistakes will generally lead to lower marks being awarded. Examples of such errors are: obviously uneven rhythm, tension, lasting contact failure, insufficiently swinging back, serious crookedness and insufficient engagement of the hind legs.

### Fundamental mistakes for 5-year-old horses

- Uneven rhythm in trot movements,
- Lack/loss of rhythm in canter including counter canter,
- Uneven or pacing steps in walk including the turn on the haunches,
- Clear resistance or loss of diagonal steps in the rein back,
- Simple changes of leg without any walk steps shown,
- Tension throughout,
- Repeated contact, tilting/mouth problems,
- Lack of suppleness in the back,
- Obvious crookedness,
- Stiff hind legs, lacking energy and engagement.

### Fundamental mistakes for 6-year-old Horses

- Uneven rhythm in trot movements,
- Lack/loss of rhythm in canter including counter canter,
- Uneven or pacing steps in walk including the walk pirouettes,
- Lack of clear bend in the lateral movements,
- Mostly incorrect flying changes,
- Tension throughout,
- Repeated contact, tilting/mouth problems,
- Lack of suppleness in the back,
- Obvious crookedness,
- Stiff hind legs, lacking energy and engagement.

### Fundamental mistakes for 7-year-old Horses

- Uneven rhythm in trot movements,
- Lack/loss of rhythm in canter incl. the same, clear tendency in canter pirouettes,
- Uneven or pacing steps in walk,
- Lack of clear bend in the lateral movements,
- Incorrect flying changes,
- Tension throughout,
- Repeated contact, tilting and open-mouth problems,

- Lack of suppleness in the back,
- Obvious crookedness,
- Stiff hind legs, lacking energy and engagement,
- Repeated resistance (inability) in collected work.

### **General Impression/Perspective.**

Besides the paces and the standard of training the judges have to decide whether or not the Horse shows enough natural talent to develop into a high-class Dressage Horse.

The general impression/perspective is based on:

- The quality of the paces (including the degree of effortlessness with which the Horse is able to perform the movements),
- The standard of training according to the training scale,
- The potential and suitability as a dressage Horse, including temperament (attentiveness, willingness to work, natural forward-going attitude, mental suppleness) conformation, expression (appearance, charisma, presence, natural charm).

A Horse with the potential to become a high-level dressage Horse always has to be preferred to a Horse that only executes the test in an obedient way but without showing any further scope.

### **The Athlete**

The Athlete's seat and the influence of his aids are of minor importance when judging Young Horse Competitions.

## **2. The Judging System of Young Horse Competitions**

### **In General**

Young Horse competitions for 5- and 6-year-old Horses are to be judged by a Ground Jury of at least three FEI judges, (one of whom must be foreign). The judges are positioned at C, working as a team, giving their marks jointly.

The marking sheets with the guidelines have to be used. The judges give five (5) marks for trot, walk, and canter, the submission incl. the level of training, and the perspective. Decimals are allowed. The marks are added up and multiplied by 2, which gives the total score. All errors have to be deducted according to the FEI Rules.

Young Horse competitions for 7-year-old horses can be judged by a Ground Jury of three or five FEI Judges. For a Ground Jury of 3, the President sits at C and judges only the technical execution of the test. The second and third judges sit at E or B and judge only the quality of the Horse. For a Ground Jury of 5, the President and a second Judge sit at C and a third Ground Jury Member at E, judging only the quality of the Horse by using a joint scoring method connected by headsets. The other two Ground Jury Members are individually judging only the technical execution of the test, one sitting at H and the other at B, but neither connected among each other nor connected to the judges at C and E (C/B and M/E also possible). The quality of the Horse and the technical execution of the test shall be weighted each with 50% towards the end result. All errors have to be deducted according to the FEI Rules.

The individual marks should be explained by detailed comments on the test sheets. Comments after each ride are not compulsory, however, they are recommended in order to make the competition more attractive to the public.

## **FEI Championships**

Championships for 5- and 6-year-old Horses are judged by a Ground Jury of four FEI judges appointed by the FEI. The President of the Ground Jury and the Commentating Judge are placed at C, the third and fourth judge at the middle of the long side at E. All judges work as a team, giving their marks jointly. A possibility for the judges to communicate with each other has to be arranged (headsets).

Championships for 7-year-old Horses are judged by a Ground Jury of five FEI judges appointed by the FEI. The President and the Commentating Judge sit at C and a third Ground Jury Member at E, judging only the quality of the Horse by using a joint scoring method connected by headsets. The other two Ground Jury Members are individually judging only the technical execution of the test, one sitting at H and the other at B, but neither connected among each other nor connected to the judges at C and E (C/B and M/E also possible). The quality of the Horse and the technical execution of the test shall be weighted each with 50% towards the end result.

One member of the judges' panel will act as a commentator for the public. It is compulsory for the second qualifying competition as well as for the final competition that comments on the ride, on the quality of the three basic paces, on the rideability and the training level as well as on the perspective of the Horse and the overall impression of the whole performance are given after each test. This kind of verbal information should be given in English and, if possible, in addition in the language of the country in which the event takes place.

Please also refer to the FEI WBFSH Dressage World Breeding Championship for Young Horses Rules, available on the FEI Website under the Dressage Rules page, for additional information.

## **CDIYH**

A list of judges who are qualified to officiate as judges for CDIYH is maintained by the FEI Dressage Department.

## **Timetable:**

The timetable of Young Horses competitions should allow 1-2 extra minutes between each competitor in order for the Horse to become accustomed to the surroundings. This time is also needed for the judges' commentary and scores which are announced immediately after the end of each individual ride.

## **Classification:**

1. In all Competitions, the winner is the Athlete having obtained the highest total percentage score, the second placed Athlete is the one with the next highest total percentage score and so on.
2. Ties: In case of equality of percentage for the first three (3) places, the following system must be used to break the tie: add the marks for "submission" and "perspective" and divide by two; the Athlete/Horse combination with the higher average mark will be ranked highest. If still tied, the "submission" mark will decide. If still tied, the combinations will be equally placed.