

GLOSSARY

- Aids (Natural)** The way in which the rider is able to communicate or influence the horse. The four natural aids are the hands, legs, seat and voice.
- Aids (Artificial)** Aids that must be “added” by the rider that are to be used to communicate with the horse. They are used to “reinforce” the natural aids. Examples of artificial aids are a whip and spurs. These two artificial aids reinforce the “leg” aids.
- Balance** The ability of the horse to maintain the distribution of his weight, together, with that of his rider. Some horses are more naturally “balanced” than others. Balance can be developed so that the horse and rider appear to work together easily in all movements.
- Bend (lateral)** Curvature in the horse’s body from the poll, along the spine all the way to the tail. A horse must bend in order to stay balanced around circles, turns and corners. The amount of the bend is dependent on the size of the curve the horse is being ridden. Bend is created in the horses body through the use of the rider’s seat, legs and hands.
- Cadence** The extra quality, expression and animation given to the rhythm and to each successive footfall by increased impulsion.
- CADORA** Canadian Dressage Owners and Riders Association. Incorporated in 1969, the National non-profit organization was formed to develop Dressage in Canada. CADORA has a uniform training system for riders, trainers, coaches and judges.
- Cavalletti** Cavalletti are used for suppling young and old horses. They are also used to improve the relaxation of the horse in trot as well as improve the rhythm of the trot. By gradually increasing the distance between the poles, it stretches the length of the horse’s stride at the trot. Cavalletti also help in the muscular development of the horse. Cavalletti are wooden poles between 12 to 16 feet in length that are attached at each end to crosses made of wood. As the cavalletti is rotated on the ground it changes the height of the pole. For trot work they should be placed approximately 1 to 1 and 1/2 meters apart. These distances can be adjusted according to the length of stride of the horse. Horses should not work over cavalletti that is too high. A maximum of 8 to 10 inches is sufficient.
- Change of rein** Changing the direction the horse is being ridden in the arena. There are several methods of changing the rein in the arena.
- Collection** The concentration of the weight of the horse moving further onto the hindquarters with a shortening of the frame without losing the impulsion or energy of the gait. The horse appears to be moving “uphill”.



Counter canter	A movement that is used to increase collection and balance. A counter canter is initiated by the rider and not simply going around on the “wrong lead”. The horse should maintain bend towards the lead while going around the arena in counter canter. This is a difficult movement for the horse to do correctly and should only be attempted when the horse is cantering with balance and ease on the correct lead.
EC	Abbreviation for Equine Canada.
FEI	Abbreviation for Federation Equestre Internationale.
Flexion	Bending the horse in the poll. With the horse’s body and neck straight, flexion will occur when it bends at the “poll”. This results in the eye and nostril on the flexed side to be slightly visible by the rider. The crest of the neck will appear to “flip” to the side away from the flexion. Each of the ears of the horse should remain the same height and one should not be more forward than the other. If you want the horse to flex to the right, it is the right rein that asks for the flexion, while the left rein regulates how much the horse flexes. If you give too much on the left rein, the horse will merely bend its neck and turn its head too much. If you give too little, the horse cannot flex at all.
Half-halt	Applying a combination of hand, core, seat and leg aids, to the horse’s front end momentarily, combined with driving the hind legs under and giving the horse freedom to step forward. Restrain the horse from going forward, setting the weight further to the hindquarter, then immediately pushing the horse and allowing it to go forward. The goal of the half halt is to prepare and rebalance the horse as it moves around the arena.
Half pass	An advanced movement requiring the horse to bend evenly in the direction of the movement as it crosses front and hind legs over to step sideways and forward. A half pass is similar to doing a travers on a diagonal line.
Impulsion	The energy from the hind quarters that passes through the horse and is controlled and directed by the rider’s hands through the reins. The flexion of the hocks increases as impulsion increases.
Kur	Freestyle to music. The rider must choreograph a series of prescribed compulsory movements putting together a pattern that displays the horse’s paces, training and special talent to the best advantage. In addition, the rider must select and edit the music that will suit the horse and its paces. The performance is judged on technical merit and artistic impression. As well, choreography, the degree of difficulty and incorporation of music are each evaluated.
Leg yielding	Applying a combination seat, leg and hand aids that move the horse sideways and forward at the same time. The horse’s body should remain straight with only slight flexion away from the direction of the movement.

Lengthening	Asking the horse to step further (longer) with each step as they either walk, trot or canter. The horse covers more ground as it maintains the original rhythm. Lengthened gaits are asked for in basic dressage before medium or extended gaits are expected.
Non-FEI	Abbreviation for not using the Federation Equestre Internationale standards.
On the bit	The condition when the horse takes a steady, equal and relaxed contact with the reins. His head is at or near the vertical, the poll is unresistant and the mouth soft.
Overtrack	Often called “overstride”. Overtracking occurs when a horse's hind hoof lands in line (not to the side) of the imprint left by the front hoof on the same side. Horses will vary in their ability to overtrack. Some will step three or four hoof prints in front of the front foot imprint with their hind feet, while others may barely step onto the imprint left by the front foot.
Passage	An advanced movement for the dressage horse. The horse moves forward in a very collected trot, but with higher and more suspended diagonal steps. There is a pause between each diagonal movement of the legs giving it an elegant “dancing” appearance.
Passive sitting	When the rider maintains a balanced position, whatever the horse does, and smoothly follows all the movements of the horse in a relaxed and erect way, without actively influencing him.
Piaffe	The most collected movement of the dressage horse. The piaffe is a “collected trot on the spot” performed with high, rhythmical diagonal steps.
Pirouette	In the ideal pirouette, (walk or canter), the horse executes a 360 (180 for a half pirouette) turn around his inside hind leg, which steps up and down almost on the same spot. The radius of the turn is equal to the length of the horse's body. A horse must maintain the true three beat gait of the canter or the four beat gait of the walk when doing a pirouette. The rhythm and regularity of the gait must not be lost.
Reader	A person who reads a dressage test aloud to the rider who is riding the test with his/her horse. A reader may be used in all non-FEI competition but cannot be used at the Championship dressage shows.
Rein back	A diagonal movement performed by the horse stepping backwards.
Renvers	Often termed “haunches out”. The horse's hindquarters remain on the track while the horse is bent in the direction of travel with the horse's forelegs brought off the track to an inner and parallel track. The hoof prints create four tracks and from the front one would see all four legs of the horse.
Rhythm	The regularity and correctly ordered flow of the gait. A horse that moves with rhythm is usually relaxed.

Salute	Performed by the rider in a dressage test at the beginning and the end as a display of respect to the judge. To salute if you are female, you take both reins in one hand, and drop your other hand behind your leg as you drop your chin to your chest. Then look up, take up both reins and be ready to move forward. Males should take the reins in one hand and remove their hat, swinging it down beside their leg. The hat is then replaced and the rider takes up both reins and is ready to move forward. Riders with safety helmets are not required to remove their headgear and may salute as a female rider does.
Schooling	Training of the horse outside the show ring.
Shoulder-in	A suppling and collecting movement where the horse moves with the shoulder to the inside of the track so that it moves on three tracks; 1: outside hind leg, 2: inside hind and outside front leg and 3: inside front leg.
Submissive	The act of being relaxed and giving in. A horse that is submissive is attentive and will not resist the aids that the rider applies.
Suspension	The moment during which all four legs of the horse are simultaneously above the ground.
Tempo	The speed at which the horse performs a certain gait.
Track	Used either as a noun or verb. As a noun, the track is the path or line the horse is ridden on. There are numerous “tracks” in the dressage ring. The outside track, second track, quarter track. Used as a verb, tracking refers to direction a horse is to take. A horse that is to “track” right at C, is supposed to “turn” right at C.
Transition	Transitions are the most important and most difficult riding exercises in all of riding. A transition is changing from one gait to another. A transition can be either <u>upward</u> or <u>downward</u> . An example of an upward transition is walk to trot or trot to canter. A downward transition would be canter to halt or trot to walk. Transitions must be schooled so the horse remains balanced, relaxed and forward from one gait to another. There can also be transitions <u>within</u> the gait. For example when moving from collected to medium trot or extended to collected canter.
Travers	Often called “haunches in”. Travers is an advanced movement where the horse is bent from the poll to the croup in the direction of travel. As it moves, its front legs follow the track, while the hind legs are brought to the inside. As with renvers, the travers, when viewed from the front will show all four legs as it is a four track movement.
Volte	A volte can only be ridden when the horse has collection. A volte is a very small circle with every step being a turn. The greatest degree of bend a horse can physically achieve is the arc of a 6 meter volte.

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Klimke, Reiner, Basic Training of the Young Horse, J.A. Allen & Company Limited, 1985

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Storl, Werner, Schooling Young Horses, Breakthrough Publications Inc., New York, 1989

Swift, Sally, Centered Riding

Zettl, Walter, Dressage in Harmony - From Basic to Grand Prix, Half Halt Press, Inc., Boonsboro, MD), 1998

Cadora Tests



Appendix A

Addresses of Dressage Organizations:

EC
Equine Canada
2460 Lancaster Road
Ottawa, Ontario
K1B 4S5

CADORA
Secretary
Diane Swanlund
5065 - 31 Avenue # 214
Edmonton, Alberta
T6L 6S5

EAADA
Edmonton Area Dressage Association
Jan Simmonds
5611-115 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 3P5

PAADA
Parkland Area Alberta Dressage Association
This website covers Calgary,
Chinook, Edmonton, Parkland,
Young Riders and Cold Lake.
www.albertadressage.com

Magazine Publications/Videos

Gait Post Magazine, 105-26730 56 Avenue, Aldergrove, BC V4W 3X5

The Pacific and Prairie Horse Journal, 10148 Bowerbank Rd., Sidney, BC V8L 3T9

Practical Horseman, PO Box 367, Mt. Morris IL 61054

Dressage Today, 656 Quince Orchard Road, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20878

Centered Riding, a video by Sally Swift

Dressage by the Letter, A guide for the novice, Moira C. Harris, Horse Illustrated

Chris Irwin, Video series, and book: Horse's Don't Lie, Horsepower Productions, Box 1875, Swift Current, SK, S9H 4M6. E-mail: horsepower@sk.sympatico.ca

Introduction to Dressage, Video available from the Alberta Equestrian Federation



Websites

www.dressagecanada.org

www.dressagedaily.com

www.ridinghabit.com

www.dressageunltd.com

www.equisearch.com

www.equestrian-connection.com

www.classicaldressage.com

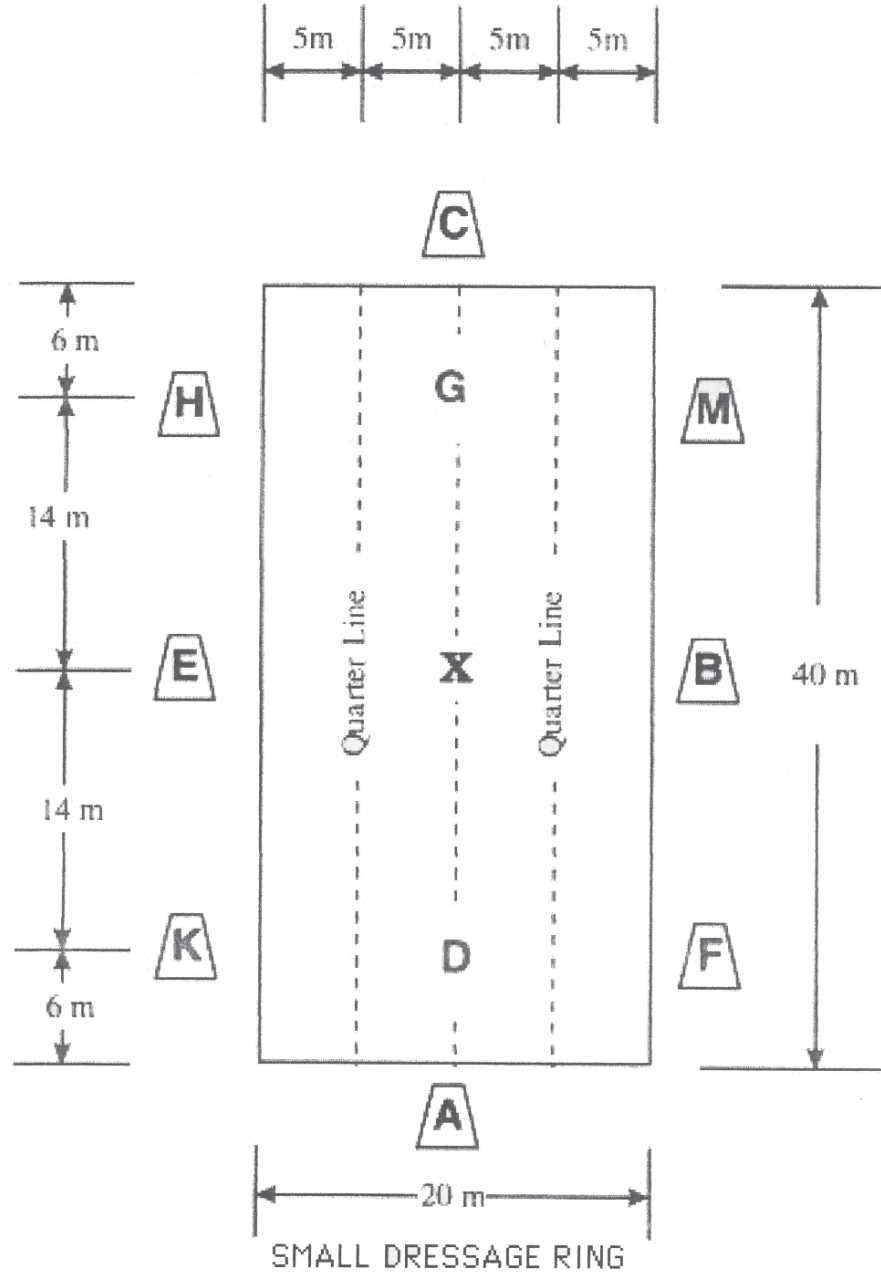
www.haynet.net

www.equiresource.com

www.horse-canada.com

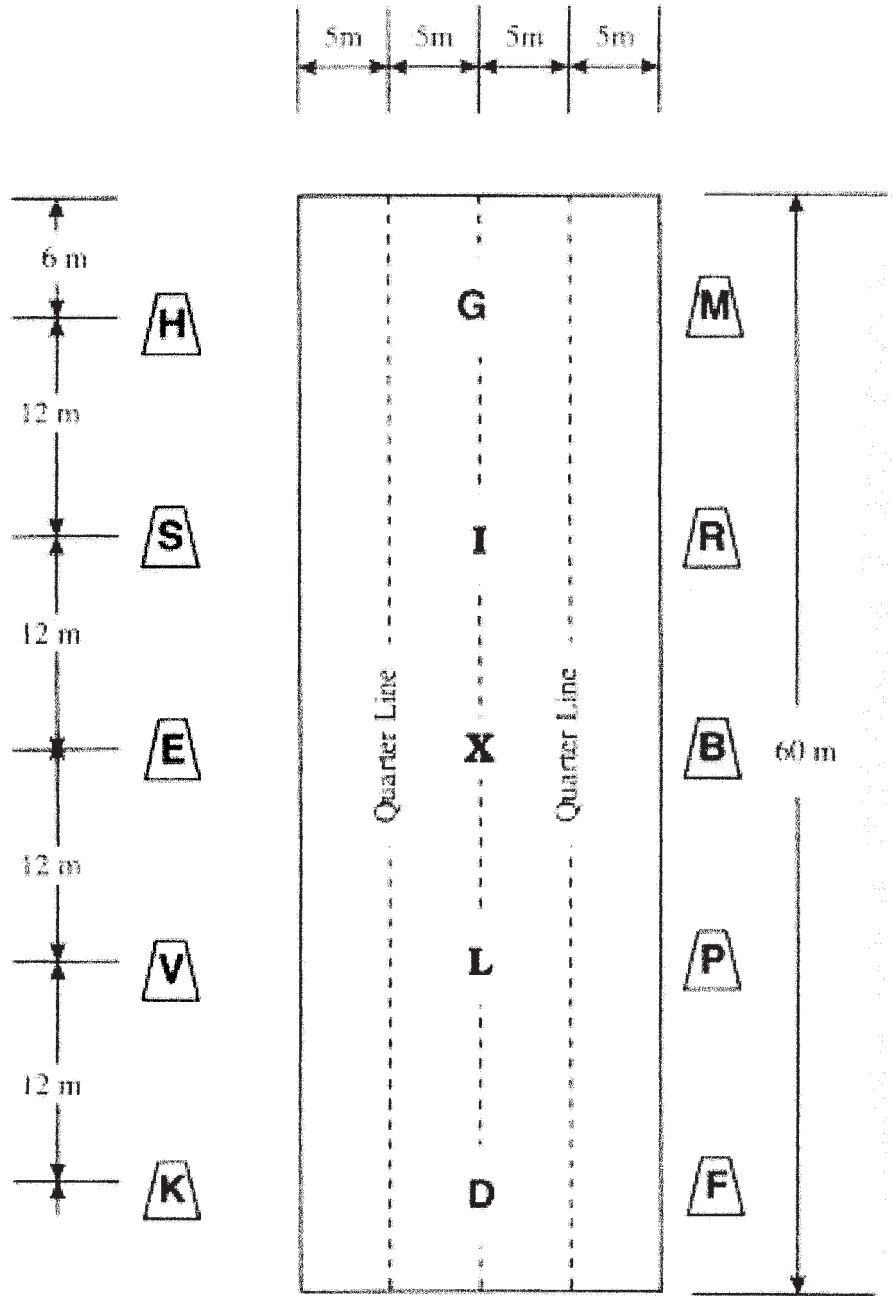
Appendix B

Small Dressage Ring



Appendix C

Standard (Large) Dressage Ring



20 x 60 ring

Appendix D

SUGGESTIONS FOR LEADERS

Welcome to the 4-H Dressage project!

Each of the members who wish to complete the dressage project have successfully completed the horsemanship levels 1-3, giving them the basics they need to work through the dressage project. Some of the members may have also completed requirements from levels 4-7, either western or English.

Members who are interested in the dressage project have now specified the desire to continue their English riding and training and follow the dressage discipline.

The following are suggested activities and lessons that may guide the leaders and members during the completion of the dressage project.

NON MOUNTED ACTIVITIES

1. Requirement Assessment

Begin by having each member use the dressage manual for reference and make a list of the requirements needed to complete the dressage project.

Next, they should identify which of the requirements they have and ensure that they will be able to get any they do not have in order to complete the dressage project.

At this point, each member may not know whether they will be competing in an actual show. You and the member(s) can decide together, whether you want them to prepare as if they will be competing formally. This is important because some of the requirements will change depending on whether they are showing or not.



2. Identifying the “level” of horse/rider combination

It is important that the member understand where they are starting at in terms of the “level” of skill that the horse and themselves is capable of completing. Once this is understood, they and the leader can determine the goals for the year.

Using the dressage manual, each member should read through some of the Training and First Level tests to identify which movements they feel their horse and themselves are capable of completing successfully. They are a team, so it is important that both horse and rider be capable of performing together.



The member could be prepared at the next riding practice to perform some of these movements. This may help decide what level they are currently working at. If someone is available, they can help evaluate the movements by using the directives in the tests.

This form of evaluation will help each member to decide on the level they wish to work towards. For example a rider might be capable of 20 meter circles at trot and canter and want to work towards 15 meter circles. They might have a solid working trot, but want to begin work on lengthening the trot. This rider would be currently riding at a Training Level, but be willing to work towards First Level.

By understanding where they are and where they want to go they can identify their goals more specifically. This will guide their training throughout the 4-H year.

3. Review EC Dressage Tests

Members can go online to the EC website to review all the dressage tests. It is very interesting for members to see the progression of training from level to level. They could complete a chart that identifies how the movements progress through Third level tests, for example. It is exciting to understand what is involved in a Grand Prix test and understand that it all started with the Basic level of training. For example, a 20 meter circle ridden at the Basic level will progress to a 6 meter volte at the Advanced level of dressage.

4. Memorization of Dressage Tests

Because it is important to memorize dressage tests before you attempt to ride them in a show or practice situation, it is useful for members to practice different methods of memorization to see which method(s) works best for them. Assign a specific test for them to memorize. They can be timed or you can give them as much time as they need (until the next meeting, perhaps). The following are the different methods that can be used:

Writing on paper

Members can use the blank copies of the dressage ring that are included with this manual. Have them “ride” the test on paper. In order to “ride” the test on paper they simply draw the lines that the movement would follow as they say the movement “out loud”. The more they do this, the more they will be able to “ride” the test without looking at the test for the movements.

Walking the test

Members can physically walk around an imaginary “small” arena saying each movement out loud as they move on the correct lines around the arena. Someone else should be reading the test to check whether they are correct or not.

Silent memorization

Members will simply use the test as a guide while they memorize it silently in their heads. They may choose at some point to put the actual test away and practice memorizing without it as they get better and better at it.

5. Make a set of Dressage Letters

C

F

A

Have members make a set of dressage letters for the basic dressage ring. They can choose the materials they use to make them. It will depend on whether they need to be movable or permanent on the arena walls; whether they will be attached to a wall, fence or pylon; or what type of arena is available. Is it sheltered from the weather or do they need to be water proof? Members can have fun doing this!

6. How to Ride Dressage movements

Members can research a particular dressage “movement” or “exercise”, such as “travers”, for example. They can then write a brief explanation of it and try to teach someone else what aids are needed to ride the travers. Most dressage movements can be explained and understood while not even mounted on the horse. The benefit of doing this, is that performing the movement is often easier if there is a complete understanding of the aids before the rider is mounted.

7. Dressage Show Field Trip

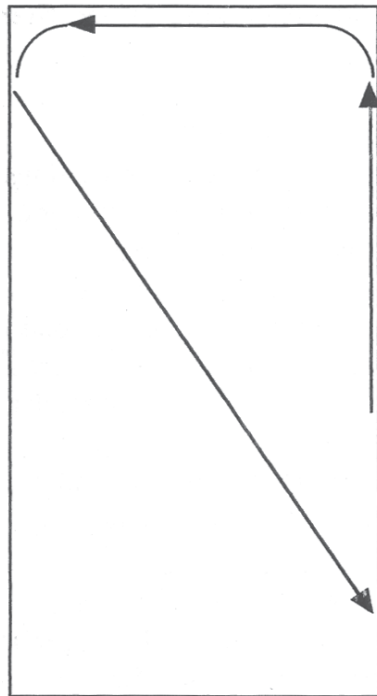
Members can attend a show that offers dressage classes. There is no better way to understand the whole concept of dressage, than to actually go and watch a dressage show. Members can attempt to “score” the horses during the movements based on the directives that are given with each movement. At a recognized show, members can even watch the wonderful “kurs” that are ridden!

8. Organize a Dressage Show

Members can organize a mini dressage show at the club level. Perhaps they can work to put on the show at the end of the 4-H year. The show can then be used to evaluate or assess the rider/horse abilities by having each rider complete the dressage test at their particular level. This is a wonderful experience for anyone interested in dressage!



MOUNTED ACTIVITIES



Use the manual first!

1. Basic Position

After using the manual to identify the position of the rider's body in the saddle, members can practice riding in basic position during the different gaits.

During the year they should work toward having good balance and position in all three gaits while riding and applying their aids.

They can practice the application of the different rein, leg and seat aids during the training of their horses while trying to maintain the basic riding position.

With careful and consistent practice they will improve their riding skills and train their horses to be sensitive to the aids.

2. Lines, Figures and Transitions

Members can practice using the natural aids to direct the horse around the arena.

They should have a complete understanding of the terminology used to ride lines and figures in the dressage arena. (serpentines, circles, changes of rein across the diagonal etc.).

They can also be asked to make upward and downward transitions at certain letters in the arena.

All of this will help the riders understand what they are capable of doing and where they need to do more training to improve their riding skills.

3. Elements of Training

Members should first use the dressage manual to identify the different elements of training. The goal of the rider is to understand these elements well enough to train the horse successfully. To do this, other resources, both written and practical (riding instruction) should be utilized. Once the rider has a clear understanding of the elements that are important to training, they can begin putting them to use in the training of their horse. Remember, training a horse and becoming a good rider does not happen overnight, and it does not happen without some effort. So be prepared to spend time and energy to reach your goals!

Rhythm

Begin with the first element, rhythm. Members will ride their horses in all three gaits trying to establish good rhythm by counting the beats as they ride. Remember it is easier to ride forward to find the horse's natural rhythm. If someone has an electronic counter, it can be used to keep the tempo of the rhythm. These are often used when developing a kur. (The tempo of your horse in each gait is determined first and then music with the same tempo is chosen.)

Relaxation is important during all of the work done in dressage training. Riders should become aware of how a horse feels and looks when they are tense or nervous so they know when to ease up on the pressures created in training. Relaxed horses will learn quicker, better and retain the training for much longer so it is important that riders take this element seriously. Relaxed horses carry their head more level and breath evenly while they swing through their backs.

Suppleness

Suppleness in a horse indicates a willingness to bend, flex and give to the rider's seat, legs and hands. Horses are large strong animals that should be willing to "give" when a rider asks for something. All training should have this element in mind. A rider can determine how supple their horse is by asking the horse to bend in the body around circles or turns, or give with the poll and jaw when asking for flexion. If the horse does not willingly give to the rider's aids, then the training should be made more clear and the horse should be taught in a way that they can learn the correct response to the rider's aids.

Working around the horse on the ground before mounting often gives a person a good indication of how supple a horse is. When you ask a horse to step over when it is being groomed, or to move their head to the side, or give to the bit when bridling, it helps to determine what work needs to be done.

Some of the indications of resistances that a horse might have that shows that it is not as supple and willing as it needs to be:

1. pulling at the bit
2. throwing the head up
3. bracing in the neck or back (very stiff)
4. pushing against the rider's leg when asked to step sideways
5. refusing to go forward.

Each of these resistances must be dealt with in a way that ensures that the horse "understands" what is required. Remember it sometimes takes more time to teach the horse the correct way, but in the end it is worth it because a horse has such a great memory and it will last a lifetime.



Contact

Contact is one of the more difficult elements to understand for both rider and horse. The connection that a rider has with the horse is developed slowly through the continuous application of all the aids. The goal is to establish a soft connection with the horse's mouth. The horse should "submit" or "give" to the rein when the rider asks for bend, flexion, changes in gait or changes in frame. Riders should practice making this soft connection at all times when riding. A good way to teach the feeling of contact is for the instructor to hold the bit end of the reins to give riders a "feel" for contact.

Impulsion

Impulsion describes the power the horse has in its hindquarters to carry it forward in all three gaits. Riders should ride with this element in mind. Once the horse understands the meaning of the leg, seat and hand aids to produce a strong forward, but "contained" gait, then the horse can be asked for more "power". Be sure that this does not result in "running" away from the leg. Impulsion comes from a contained and more collected frame, by using legs and seat in combination with the hands.

Straightness

Straightness is one of the more difficult elements to establish. Horses are naturally crooked or one sided, just as we are right or left handed. A horse is straight when its forehead is in line with its hindquarters whether on a straight or curved line. Once a horse is able to move forward between the rider's hands, legs and seat, then the horse should be made to step straight in all three gaits. It is a good idea to use an "eye on the ground" to help guide the rider with the aids to create "true" straightness. Transitions are a time when most horses want to take the "easy way out", and swing the hips one way or the other. Often riders are unaware of their horse swinging the hindquarters in as they step into canter, for example. The goal is being able to go both directions easily and evenly so it is important that riders practise both ways.

Collection

Collection is the highest step in training a horse. There are of course differing degrees of collection that are developed as dressage training continues. Do not expect the horse to perform a collecting movement such as shoulder-in without establishing the other elements and having a certain amount of physical conditioning in place. Just as you would not expect to do well in a marathon without training for a long period of time, a horse cannot be expected to properly "hold" itself up in front, and place more weight to hindquarters without the proper preparation and training.

Transitions and changes of directions, circles and other figures are very important in developing natural collection for a horse so these should be continually worked on during the schooling of the dressage horse.



4. Gaits of the Horse



In dressage, there are a number of variations within the gaits. Using the manual to understand what each of these variations are, the member should work at his/her level to improve the gait. For example, a rider should work in “walk” and develop the free, medium, and extended walks. Have someone watch to see whether the horse is clearly overtracking in the extended walk, for example. The same can be done in trot and canter if the horse is capable. Do not rush the horse as this is training that should be continued throughout the year. Have the member identify the goal that they wish to reach with each riding practice.

Remember, horses do best if they learn one new thing at a time, so encourage members to establish sensible riding goals.

5. Riding Dressage Tests

Members can choose a test that is possible for the horse and rider to complete with some degree of success. After memorizing the test, they can ride the test during a practice session. Other members can watch and help to evaluate the movements so that positive comments can be made at the end of the test. It is important that everyone included in this activity be very familiar with the directives of the test so that useful comments are made. The riding area may not be exactly 20 meters by 60 meters. Try to divide the area that is available so that it is even. This is important for making truly “round” circles and correct figures in the dressage ring.

Quite often a video camera is a useful tool in evaluating the performance of both horse and rider. If the ridden test is videotaped it will allow time for the rider to analyze the good and bad points of the ride. Then more goals for training can be made for the next ride. Remember that most of the time if the horse we are riding does something wrong we should first look at ourselves as riders. Horses are generally willing to please if they have been taught what to do. If a horse is having difficulty with something, try to determine what part of it it doesn't understand and re-teach that in order to progress. Keep the training simple and clear!



Appendix E

RIDER ASSESSMENT

The evaluation of each rider and horse combination can be guided by the following suggestions and Levels 1-4 assessment tools.

The leader and members should make a decision as the year progresses as to how they wish to be evaluated.

The use of dressage tests will help with successful evaluation and identification of each skill required at the different levels.

The assessment of unmounted skills and knowledge can take place throughout the year.

The unmounted skills can be evaluated using some of the activities/suggestions that are included with this manual.

There may be a formal assessment of mounted skills by having members ride a dressage test at the level they have been working on. This could be done at the club level, open show level or recognized show level.

A more informal approach to evaluation is to assess the member and horse's skills during the riding sessions throughout the year.

This is important for success as evaluation of different skills within each level will lead to a better understanding of what is required at each level.

For example, in order to ride at First Level, the rider/horse combination must be able to ride 15 meter circles at trot and canter. In the process of being able to ride these figures correctly, they might be evaluated to help them be more accurate and correct in their training. Then when they ride a First Level test as a final "demonstration" or "evaluation"

method, the practice, with evaluation of all the different parts will have paid off as the pair is successful in the end. Each member can keep a record of the skills and information that should be learned and check off each skill that has been evaluated by the leader or other person responsible for assessing the skill of each member.

There are assessment tool checklists included with this manual to help in the evaluation of each member.

Whatever method of assessment is used, the rider and horse should enjoy the progress they make as they work through the 4-H dressage project. This project can be continued from year to year as the horse and rider simply continue to progress from one level to the next.

GOOD LUCK AND HAVE FUN WHILE LEARNING!



Dressage Project Assessment Tools

Level 1

Dismounted Abilities

- Explain briefly how dressage originated.
- List three movements that are required during a Training dressage test.
- What is the size of a basic dressage ring?
- Identify the letters of the basic dressage ring in the correct positions.
- Explain and demonstrate how to “salute”.
- Explain why a snaffle bit is used in dressage.
- Explain why a dressage saddle might be preferable to a jumping saddle.
- Explain what a flash noseband is.
- Describe the riding attire for a dressage rider in the show ring.
- What does “on the flat” mean?
- What is a “schooling” show?
- How many marks is each movement in a dressage test worth?
- Memorize a Training 1, 2, 3 or 4 test
- Why does a bell or whistle sound before beginning a dressage test?
- Explain the difference between a medium walk and a free walk on a loose rein.

Level 1

Mounted Abilities

- Demonstrate how to salute.
- Demonstrate how to ride in correct basic position in halt and walk.
- Demonstrate a working trot on center line followed by a halt through walk.
- Demonstrate a smooth transition between walk and trot, both upwards and downwards.
- Demonstrate correct contact in halt and walk and trot.
- Demonstrate a free walk on a loose rein.
- Execute a rising trot on a 20 meter circle in both directions
- Perform a working canter on a 20 meter circle in both directions with the correct lead.
- Show correct use of aids during a turn on the forehand in both directions.
- Show how to change diagonals after a change of rein across the diagonal.
- Ride a Training 1, 2, 3, 4 test completing all required movements with a score of 50% or better.

Dressage Project Assessment Tools

Level 2

Unmounted Abilities

- Name the dressage tests ridden at basic level.
- Explain how the progression of training occurs between basic 1 and basic 2 level according to the movements required in the tests.
- What is the distance between the letters in a basic dressage ring?
- What are the aids necessary to ask the horse to come on the bit?
- Explain what “above the bit” and “behind the bit” mean when riding?
- Explain what type of head gear a rider under 18 years of age must wear when showing in an EC recognized dressage show.
- What does EC stand for?
- What type of fence is found around the perimeter of a dressage ring?
- Name three movements found in a First Level test that are not in a Training level test.
- What is meant by “co-efficient of 2” in terms of marks on a dressage test?
- What is a passing mark for a dressage test?
- Memorize a First Level test and repeat it outloud.
- What book contains all the dressage tests used each year in EC shows.
- Explain the difference between a working trot and a lengthened trot.
- On paper, show how a serpentine of three loops wall to wall is ridden in a basic dressage ring.
- Name the first three elements of training in dressage.
- List three ways that a rider’s hand affect a horse when riding.
- Explain the difference between the inside and outside rein.

Level 2

Mounted Abilities

- Demonstrate how to ride in correct basic position in walk and rising trot.
- Demonstrate smooth transitions between trot and canter in both directions, both upward and downward.
- Execute a serpentine of three loops wall to wall in sitting trot.
- Execute a change of rein across the diagonal with lengthened stride at trot.
- Execute a 15 meter circle at sitting trot in both directions.
- Execute a 15 meter circle at canter in both directions on the correct lead.
- Execute a figure eight at canter with a simple change of lead through trot.
- Demonstrate a square halt with immobility for four seconds.
- Demonstrate using the correct aids for leg yielding both left and right (not necessarily mastering the leg yield, but rather using correct aids)
- Demonstrate a free walk on a loose rein.
- Demonstrate a working trot (rising) on a 20 meter circle letting the horse stretch on a long rein. (see First Level test) for directives.
- Perform a First Level test completing all required movements with a score of 50% or better.

Dressage Project Assessment Tools

Level 3

Unmounted Abilities

- Explain how to ride a warm-up session before your dressage test is to be ridden.
- Name the last four elements of training in dressage.
- List three ways the rider's legs affect the horse when riding.
- Explain the difference between the "driving" and the "holding" leg.
- Name three movements that are found in a First Level test that are not found in a Training Level test.
- Explain how to perform a simple change of lead.
- List the four areas that are evaluated in the "collective marks" on a dressage test.
- List the levels in dressage from training through to advanced.
- What is a Kur?
- When does a rider begin using a double bridle in dressage?
- What is the difference between the working trot and the collected trot.
- Memorize a Second level test and repeat it outloud.
- Explain the purpose of the half halt.
- Become a "reader" for someone performing a dressage test.

Level 3

Mounted Abilities

- Demonstrate leg yield in both directions at trot.
- Execute working trot on a 10 meter circle in both directions.
- Execute a working canter on a 10 meter circle in both directions.
- Perform a lengthened stride at canter without quickening the pace.
- Demonstrate the correct use of the aids to perform a shoulder-in at a walk.
(mastering the shoulder-in is not necessary)
- Ride a four loop serpentine wall to wall at sitting trot with correct use of the aids and changes of bend and flexion.
- Demonstrate correct basic position at walk, trot and canter in both directions.
- Demonstrate a warm -up routine that would be used before riding a First Level dressage test.
- Perform a First Level test 4 dressage test completing all required movements with a score of 50% or better.



Dressage Project Assessment Tools

Level 4

Unmounted Abilities

- Explain how the directives of a dressage test help the rider.
- Describe specifically what a dressage judge is looking for when marking the “collective marks” on a dressage test.
- Explain why some movements in a dressage test have a coefficient of 2.
- Groom and braid your horse as if in preparation for a formal dressage show.
- Memorize a Second Level test and repeat it outloud.
- Name the levels in dressage from Basic to Grand Prix.
- How does a dressage rider dress when showing at the advanced level.
- Explain what an EC passport is.
- Explain the difference between the working canter and medium canter.
- Describe the aids necessary to perform a travers either right or left.
- Describe the aids necessary to perform a shoulder-in right or left.
- Explain what a “counter canter” is.
- Describe each of the seven elements of training.
- Memorize a Second Level test and repeat it outloud.

Level 4

Mounted Abilities

- Demonstrate correct basic position in all gaits and variations of each gait during a warm-up ride.
- Demonstrate correct use of aids for shoulder in right and left.
- Perform a rein back of four steps.
- Perform a collected canter on a 20 meter circle in both directions.
- Demonstrate correct use of aids for travers left and right.
- Perform counter canter in both directions around the arena.
- Demonstrate a canter on a 20 meter circle letting horse stretch on a long rein with some contact to be maintained.
- Perform a medium canter in both directions.
- Show smooth transitions between gaits both upward and downward.
- Show differences in the gaits while performing variations within the gaits. (example, working trot, collected trot, medium trot.)
- Perform a Second Level dressage test completing all required movements with a score of 50% or better.



Appendix F

EC dressage tests

The most current EC Dressage tests are available on line at:
www.dressagecanada.org/dcp.asp?pageid=68#copyright

Or, members can write to:

Dressage Canada
2460 Lancaster Road
Ottawa, Ontario K1B 4S5
Telephone: (613) 248-3433
Fax: (613) 248-3484

