

Dressage RULES

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PONY CLUB
VICTORIA

These rules and guidelines have been produced by the Pony Club Victoria Incorporated (PCV).

This rule book governs all Dressage competitions conducted by the PCV, and its affiliates, and supersedes all previous versions.

This book endeavours to provide a simple picture of what is expected from riders at the various grades.

Definitions

In this rule book, the following definitions apply:

- The term “bell” includes any device used to signal to a competitor.
- FEI means Fédération Equestre Internationale [Horsesport](#)
- EA means Equestrian Australia [Equestrian Australia](#).
- Unless stated to the contrary, a reference in this handbook to a rule, in this publication or elsewhere, refers to the rule and all its sub-clauses.
- Unless otherwise specified, reference to a rule number means the rules within this publication.
- The singular includes the plural and vice versa; and words importing one gender include the other.
- Some reference material noted in this book is available from the PCV web site www.ponyclubvic.org.au.

Acknowledgements

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1. Rules Governing Dressage Competitions

1.1 Use of Rules

- 1.1.a Any club or organisation hosting a Dressage competition under PCV rules must abide by these rules.
- 1.1.b Rules cannot provide for every eventuality. In unforeseen circumstances it is the responsibility of the appropriate Official(s) in charge to make a decision in the spirit of the sport adhering as closely as possible to the intention of the rules.

1.2 Source of Rules

- 1.2.a These rules follow FEI and EA Rules as closely as possible.
- 1.2.b Reference should be made to current EA Rules (www.equestrian.org.au) in the first instance and then FEI Rules (www.horsesport.org) for further clarification if a rule is not covered in this book.

2. Pony Club Conditions

2.1 Eligibility to Compete

- 2.1.a To be able to compete, the combination (rider and horse) must prove eligibility, in accordance with [PCV Handbook of Bylaws](#). Eligibility requirements cover:
 - i. PCV club member cards
 - ii. Rally attendance
 - iii. Grading
- 2.1.b It is the member's responsibility to ensure they are eligible to compete before entering a competition.
- 2.1.c Members are advised to consult with their club DC if they are unsure of their eligibility.

2.2 Hors Concours

- 2.2.a Riders may compete hors concours only in accordance with the [PCV Handbook of Bylaws](#).

2.3 Grading

- 2.3.a A grading system applies in accordance with the [PCV Handbook of Bylaws](#) and PCV Grading Guidelines.
- 2.3.b There are seven grades of pony club Dressage. The standards expected at each grade of Dressage are explained in [Dressage Expected Standards](#).

2.4 Uniform

2.4.a Correct uniform must be worn in accordance with the [PCA Gear Rules](#).

2.5 Competitor's Number

2.5.a Competitor numbers must be in accordance with the [PCA Gear Rules](#).

2.6 Saddlery and Equipment Requirements

2.6.a Saddlery and equipment (gear) is permitted only in accordance with the [PCA Gear Rules](#) and the PCV Whip Rules:

- A whip not exceeding 1200mm including the lash is permitted for Grades Adv, 1, 2 & 3 & EA Tests Preliminary and above. A crop may be used.
- A whip not exceeding 750mm including the lash/flap is permitted for Grades 4, 5 & 6, & EA Preparatory tests.

2.7 Gear Check

2.7.a Gear (saddlery and equipment) must be checked at all competitions in accordance with the [PCA Gear Rules](#).

2.7.b It is the competitor's responsibility to abide by the saddlery and equipment requirements in accordance with the [PCA Gear Rules](#).

2.7.c It is the organising committee's responsibility to provide a steward who must check the saddlery and equipment in accordance with the [PCA Gear Rules](#) before allowing a competitor to enter the arena.

2.8 Medication Control of Horse and/or Rider

2.8.a Medication control rules for both horse and/or rider apply in accordance with the [PCV Handbook of Bylaws](#).

2.8.b The current lists of prohibited and permitted substances are contained in the FEI Veterinary Regulations. In essence, the rules prohibit the use of any substance other than a normal nutrient that, by its nature, could affect the overall performance of the horse.

2.9 Warm-up

2.9.a Once on the grounds:

- i. Only the competitor may ride or lunge the horse. Riders under the age of 14 may have another competent person over the age of 14 to lunge their horse. Handler recommended to wear enclosed solid footwear, helmet and gloves.
- ii. Competitors must use correct gear (including approved helmet and boots, and visible competitor number) in accordance with the [PCA Gear Rules](#).

2.9.b A horse may not be ridden or led into a competition arena; this applies also when the arenas are erected on the day(s) prior to the event. If the Arena is a permanent fixture, this rule applies from the time the organising committee has deemed it a competition area and this time must be well advertised.

2.9.c A competitor may be eliminated for a breach of these conditions.

2.10 Queries and Protests

2.10.a Queries and protests must be managed in accordance with the [PCV Handbook of Bylaws](#).

2.11 Arenas

2.11.a Refer to Rule 6.5 for applicable arena sizes.

2.11.b Refer to Rule 7 for plans of the arenas showing the position of the markers.

3. Execution of Tests

3.1 Fundamental Requirements

- 3.1.a All movements contained in tests must be executed in the order laid down in the test.
- 3.1.b The rider must be mounted on entering and leaving the arena and may not be led.
- 3.1.c In a movement, which must be carried out at a certain point of the arena, the movement must be executed at that moment when the rider's body is adjacent to this point.
- 3.1.d Tests:
- i. To signal the start of a test the Judge will sound a bell and/or make a visual signal.
 - ii. Judging of all tests begin with the entry into the arena at A but is not influenced by any actions of the competitor prior to their entrance at A.
 - iii. If the Judge sounds the bell during a test, the rider must stop riding the test and proceed to the Judge for instruction.
- COMMENT: The bell referred in these rules means a bell or car horn or other sound or signal as advised by the Judge at the time.
- 3.1.e Tests end:
- i. Grades Advanced to 4: after the salute at the end of the test, as soon as the horse moves forward.
 - ii. Grade 5 and Grade 6: upon exit at A unless otherwise stipulated.
- 3.1.f Any incidents before the beginning or after the end of the test have no effect on the marks.
- 3.1.g A competitor must leave the arena as is prescribed in the test instructions.
- 3.1.h Riding with both hands on the reins is obligatory in all Dressage competitions except when saluting or leaving the arena after the final salute.
- 3.1.i The use of the voice in any manner, or clicking the tongue once or repeatedly, is a fault and must be penalised by the deduction of two marks from those that would otherwise have been given for the movement where this occurred: not all Judges will deduct marks as not all Judges may have heard the sound.

3.2 Calling of Tests

- 3.2.a Dressage tests may be called for Pure Dressage. Tests may NOT be called in Dressage State Championships. Tests may NOT be called for Horse Trials, Combined Training or Short Course Dressage.
- 3.2.b Where callers are allowed, it is the responsibility of the competitor to ensure that only the printed text, or extracts thereof, is read out and that no other form of assistance is given.
- 3.2.c The caller may read each movement once or twice only. Failure to observe this rule may entail elimination.

3.3 Entering the Arena

- 3.3.a After the bell has sounded, the rider must enter the arena at A as soon as possible.
- i. Failure to enter the arena within 45 seconds of the bell being sounded will entail a penalty of 2 marks per Judge.
 - ii. Entering at A before the starting signal has been given may entail a penalty of 2 marks per Judge.

3.4 Leaving the Arena During Test

- 3.4.a A horse leaving a fenced arena with all four feet between the beginning and the end of the test will be penalised as follows:
- i. Grade 5 & 6 – error of course.
 - ii. All other grades –
 - elimination
 - OR
 - error of course if the horse leaves the arena at an opening at A, and re-enters within 20 seconds.
- 3.4.b A horse leaving the arena with all four feet when the surrounds of the arena are defined by intermittent boards, poles or line markings will be penalised as follows:
- i. All grades – error of course
- 3.4.c When a horse makes such an “error of course” as in ‘3.4.a.i’ or ‘3.4.b’ above the Judge at C warns the rider by sounding the bell. The Judge then directs him to re-enter the arena at the nearest practical place, then shows him, if necessary, where to recommence the test.

3.5 Salute

- 3.5.a When saluting, all riders must take the reins and whip in one hand, either hand may be used, drop their free hand by their side and bow their head to the Judge.

3.6 Dismounting or Fall of Horse and/or Rider

- 3.6.a The rider must be mounted on entering and leaving the arena in accordance with Rule 3.1.b.
- 3.6.b If a rider dismounts after entering the arena without a reason acceptable to the Judge, no marks will be given for the movement. A dropped whip, hat, spectacles etc may be handed back to the rider. However, in the case of a dropped whip it is preferable that this is done at the end of the test.
- 3.6.c Any fall of horse and/or rider between the entry at A and the end of the test will entail elimination from that competition.
- 3.6.d The fall must be categorised and action taken in accordance with PCV Bylaws.

3.7 Resistance of Horse

- 3.7.a Resistance which prevents continuation of the test for a period exceeding 20 seconds shall be penalised by Elimination. This also applies to resistance before entering the Dressage arena and within the arena surrounds.
- 3.7.b Resistance that may endanger rider, horse, judges, or the public will be eliminated for safety reasons earlier than 20 seconds. There is no appeal against this decision.

3.8 Unauthorised Assistance

- 3.8.a Any outside intervention by voice, signs, etc. is considered as unauthorised assistance to a rider or horse and is penalised by elimination.

3.9 Lameness

- 3.9.a If there is a doubt as to the soundness of the horse, the competitor will be allowed to complete the test, and any unevenness of pace will be penalised. The Judge(s) will report the matter to the Organising Committee who will convene an Assessment Panel made up of one Committee Executive and 2 other knowledgeable people to decide if the horse may be permitted to continue in the competition. There is no appeal against this decision.
- 3.9.b If the horse is so lame that in the opinion of the Judge(s) it ought not to be asked to complete the test, the Judge(s) may, without appeal, eliminate the competition.

3.10 Errors of Course

- 3.10.a If the bell is not sounded at an error of course and the test requires the same movement to be repeated and the rider makes the same error, the rider is only penalised once. The Judge must be aware of the effect of one movement on the next and where mirror images occur, in order to be prompt in notifying the competitor.
- 3.10.b Every error of course, whether the bell is sounded or not, must be penalised except as noted in 3.10.a above:
- the first by 2 marks,
 - the second by 4 additional marks, and
 - the third by elimination.

However, if time permits the Judge may allow the rider to continue the test to the end awarding marks in the ordinary way.

The use of the voice referred to in 3.1.i above is not an error of course.

- 3.10.c It is not always necessary to ring the bell for an error of course. Below are some instances that will and will not require the ringing of the bell. However, not all cases can be quoted and it is the Judge who must decide to sound the bell. In deciding not to ring the bell the Judge must consider the effect this will have on the rest of the test.

<p>The Judge will ring the bell when the rider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turns right instead of left • Omits a movement • When the movement is the first of a mirror image and the competitor rides; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rising trot not sitting trot ○ An incorrect circle size • Enters the arena at the incorrect gait 	<p>The Judge need not ring the bell</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the final halt is at X instead of G or vice versa • At the salute, not taking the reins in one hand • Competitor makes an early transition • Does rising trot instead of sitting trot
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- 3.10.d The competitor is shown by the Judge the point at which they are to re-take the test which could be the movement prior to where the error occurred. Judging will re-commence when the rider reaches the point where the error of course occurred.
- 3.10.e A competitor must not repeat a movement of the test unless the Judge rings the bell for an error of course and instructs the rider to repeat the movement.
- 3.10.f If the rider has executed a movement and attempts the same movement again, the Judge must allocate marks for the first movement only and also penalise the second attempt as an error of course.
- 3.10.g If the Judge has not noted an error, the competitor has the benefit of the doubt and no penalty is given.
- 3.10.h Penalty marks are deducted on the Judge's sheet from the total marks scored by the competitor. The Judge must note on the test sheet the movement at which the error was made.

4. Penalties

4.1.a A competitor eliminated must receive marks for the movements up to the point of elimination so that when they receive their Dressage test paper, they can observe their performance to the point of elimination.

4.1.b Reasons for which a competitor may incur penalties:

DRESSAGE PENALTIES		
Incident	Penalty	Rule
Failure to attend gear check prior to competing	Elimination	2.7.b
Incorrect saddlery or equipment in warm up	Elimination	2.9.a.ii
Incorrect saddlery or equipment during test (ie whip)	Elimination	2.7.b
Incorrect person lunging a horse	Elimination	2.9.a.i
Horse entering a competition arena before a competition	Elimination (at Organiser's discretion)	2.9.b
Use of voice during test (each occurrence)	2 marks	3.1.i
Failure to enter arena within 45 sec of start signal	2 marks	3.3.a.ii
Entering before start signal	2 marks at Judges' discretion	3.3.a.ii
Leaving fenced arena with all four feet not at A (Grades 4 and above)	Elimination	3.4.a
Rider dismounts without an acceptable reason	No marks for that movement	3.6.b
Fall of Horse or Rider (between entry & end of test)	Elimination	3.6.c
Resistance of horse exceeding 20 sec, before entry or during test	Elimination at Judges' discretion	3.7.a
Resistance of horse that may endanger rider or others	Elimination at Judges' discretion	3.7.b
Unauthorised Assistance	Elimination	3.8
Unevenness of pace	Assessed for further participation	3.9.a
Severely lame	Elimination	3.9.b
Other reasons in accordance with the PCV Handbook of Bylaws	Elimination	
First occurrence of any error of course listed below.	2 marks	3.10.b
Second occurrence of any error of course listed below.	4 marks	3.10.b
Third occurrence of any error of course listed below	Elimination	3.10.b
If the bell is not sounded at an error of course and the test requires the same movement to be repeated and the rider makes the same error, the rider is only penalised once.	2 marks on first occurrence ONLY	3.10.a
Error of Course		
Repeating a movement (unless instructed)		3.10.f
Leaving fenced arena with all four feet at opening at A (Grade 4 and above), and re-enters within 20 seconds		3.4.a.ii
Leaving fenced arena with all four feet (Grade 5 & 6)		3.4.a.ii
Leaving arena marked with poles etc. on ground (All grades)		3.4.b

5. Judging and Scoring

5.1 Judge's Responsibilities

- 5.1.a A Judge is expected to give their time and knowledge to competitors in such a way that the competitor will benefit.
- 5.1.b To provide this service Judges must:
- i. Fully learn the applicable test and know exactly where each movement starts and ends. A small plan of each movement separately may help.
 - ii. Have a clear picture in his mind of what is a reasonable performance for the grade at which he is judging and then allocate scale marks, which best relate to the performance of each movement, in accordance with Rules 5.3 – 5.6
 - iii. Be in possession of a current Dressage Rule Book and be conversant with all rules governing the competition and the layout of the arena.
 - iv. Allow plenty of time before the competition commences to:
 - Check that the arena is satisfactory and, if necessary, have it modified at his discretion. Once the competition has commenced, the conditions must stay (as far as possible) the same for the following competitors.
 - Inspect how the Judge's car is placed. The Judge should sit about 5 metres directly behind C.
 - Spectators (including videos and cameras) should be at least 10 metres from the arena.
 - Check that the organiser of the competition has provided a penciller and bell (if a car horn is not used). It is desirable that the Judge talks to the penciller before commencing, to avoid possible misunderstanding prior to the first competitor.
 - Give full attention to each competitor and mark tests in accordance with Rules 5.3 – 5.6 and maintain the same standard for all competitors in a competition and all events.
 - Do not take into account knowledge of riders, horses or previous performance.

5.2 Conflict of Interest

- 5.2.a Each Judge must make a decision that allows for the competition to be judged under the fairest possible conditions. At times conflict of interest are unavoidable, however consideration needs to be given to the following scenarios before accepting a judging position:
- i. A family member.
 - ii. A close relative of the competitor.
 - iii. The owner of the horse.
 - iv. The regular coach of the competitor.
 - v. A person having instructed/held a riding clinic for any competitor within two weeks prior to an event may not judge those who participated in the clinic.
 - vi. A person who is provided with private billeted accommodation with the competitor or family of a competitor they are scheduled to judge.

5.3 Judging the Horse's Movements

- 5.3.a A Judge must quickly evaluate a competitor's performance then allocate marks and make relevant comments on the test paper.
- 5.3.b A Judge who passes over faults without penalising in mark or remark is not assisting the competitor to recognise their lack of proficiency or false methods. This type of judging is ultimately unfair to the competitor as it inhibits their development and generally lowers competitive standards.
- 5.3.c The purity of movement is the foundation of Dressage and definitions of paces and movements. Refer to Rule 9 for these definitions.
- 5.3.d Expectations for the various grades are in Rule 10.

5.4 Marking

- 5.4.a Opinions in marking naturally vary among Judges. However, some Judges are very severe and mark a movement without considering the grade at which the competitor is competing. Consequently, the competitor's confidence may be unduly damaged. Conversely, damage may be caused by over marking a movement, which results in the competitor obtaining a false sense of the level of training achieved.
- 5.4.b The aim in all judging should be that no one will be completely discouraged nor will they be carried away with the over-inflated impression of their own ability.
- 5.4.c The full scale of marks should be used.

5.5 Marking Movements and Scoring

- 5.5.a The Judge must allocate a mark from 0 – 10 for each numbered movement.
- 5.5.b Half marks may be given.

5.6 Scale of Marks

- 5.6.a The scale of marks is as follows:

10	excellent	4	insufficient
9	very good	3	fairly bad
8	good	2	bad
7	fairly good	1	very bad
6	satisfactory	0	not executed
5	sufficient		

- 5.6.b The marks 10 and 0 must be awarded where the performances warrant their use in accordance with Rule 5.4.c.
- 5.6.c The “0 not executed” mark means that nothing of the required movement has been attempted.
- 5.6.d Half marks may be given.

5.7 Scoring

- 5.7.a Where a coefficient is indicated on the test paper scorers must double the mark for that movement and place in the total column.
- 5.7.b Add the marks in the total column to give the good marks given by the Judge.
- 5.7.c Deduct the errors of course from the total. Calculate the percentage and/or Penalty Points if required for the event.
- 5.7.d Check additions for errors.
- 5.7.e Place results on the scoreboard as soon as possible. Scores announced while the competition is still in progress are subject to confirmation. The time of posting must be written on the scoreboard. Any protest must be lodged with the OC within 30 minutes of the posting of the last interim score in the final phase of the section. After 30 minutes the scores and places are confirmed.
- 5.7.f Make the test sheets available for competitors after approval by the Judges. Test sheets are confidential.
- 5.7.g Scores:
 - i. One test competition – Highest score (final mark) is the winner.

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- ii. Multiple test competitions must clearly state in the event schedule the scoring method to be used to establish championship placings.

If not specifically stated, the scorers shall add final mark from each test together. Highest overall score is the winner.

5.7.h Separating Equality of scores

- i. Individual: single test competition.
 - The higher total collective marks will decide the higher placing.
 - If these marks are equal, the placing remains tied.
- ii. Individual: multiple test competition: One Overall Prize: placings determined as specified in the schedule. If equal places then:
 - Highest score in the highest numbered test.
 - If these scores are equal, places will be determined as for a single test competition, using the highest numbered test.
 - If there is still a tie this process is repeated with the next highest numbered test until a winner is determined or until there are no further tests to compare, in which case the placing remains tied.

5.8 Unmarked Movement

- 5.8.a If a mark has not been recorded on one of a Judge's sheets and the Judge cannot recall the movement, or cannot be found, the mark allotted will be the average of the collective marks.

5.9 Pencillers

- 5.9.a Each Judge must be provided with a competent penciller who should know the test and have legible handwriting.

5.10 Dressage Test Paper

- 5.10.a Organising committees must provide the Judge with:
- i. One Dressage test paper per competitor per section.
 - ii. Duplicate test papers in accordance with Rule 6.1.c.
- 5.10.b The Judge must sign the test papers and treat them as confidential until given to the competitors, at which time a test paper becomes the competitor's private property.
- 5.10.c Competitors must be given their test paper immediately after all of their section scores have been posted.

5.11 Test Paper Advice to Competitors

- 5.11.a On receiving the paper, the Judge's marks indicate how the competitor has fared but not how to train for the future. However, in assessing what future training is required, the competitor should look at the remarks beside each movement, which identify the deficiency in the movement and may also offer helpful advice.
- 5.11.b There is limited space and time for the Judge to make remarks on the test paper. Therefore, a Judge must identify the deficiency and choose only what he thinks the competitor has a chance to correct and then, frame the remarks as constructively as possible.
- 5.11.c Directives are given on the test paper for each movement which will help Judges and riders understand what is required for each movement.
- 5.11.d If a movement is given low marks, it is for a reason. The Judge should state the reason concisely. Likewise, praise should be given wherever possible. There is nothing like praise to encourage a competitor on to better things.

5.12 Expected Standards

- 5.12.a Refer to the PCV website for [Expected Standards](#).

6. Organising Committees

6.1 Duties

- 6.1.a Refer to the [PCV Handbook of Bylaws](#) for organising committee duties and also zone approval requirements.
- 6.1.b Competitor number requirements must be in accordance with the [PCA Gear Rules](#).
- 6.1.c Duplicate tests must be given to the Zone Chief Instructor immediately after the competition. A minimum of 6 randomly selected Dressage test papers from each section is required.
- 6.1.d Give competitors their test papers in accordance with Rule 5.10c.

6.2 Creating Sections

- 6.2.a Depending on the number of entries and in liaison with Dressage Judges, each grade may be divided into sections in order to make the running and timing of the competition manageable.
- 6.2.b If sections are created, each section competes in its own right, and places are awarded for each section.
- 6.2.c If a dressage Jackpot competition is offered in conjunction with a CT Competition, only the Pure Dressage test may be called. The CT test scores may be used for both CT and the Jackpot, providing PC combinations are graded the same grade for DR & CT, and Open combinations enter the same grade for DR & CT.

6.3 Test Timing

- 6.3.a Dressage tests are not timed. These suggested time intervals may be useful when planning the running of the competition.

Grade	Intervals between Tests
Advanced	9 minutes
1	8 minutes
2	8 minutes
3	8 minutes
4	7 minutes
5	7 minutes
6	7 minutes

6.4 Schedules

All programs/schedules to include the following:

- Statement that Dressage is to be held under current PCV Rules – Refer to the PCV Bylaws.
- Timetable of grades/events/classes.
- The Dressage Test for each grade.
- Disclaimer of liability.

6.5 Table of Recommended Tests for various competitions

6.5.a The following test usage is recommended. EA Tests are also recommended by PCV from time to time.

	Grade 6	Grade 5	Grade 4	Grade 3	Grade 2	Grade 1	Advanced	PCV110
Arena Size	40 x 20m	40 x 20m	40 x 20m	60 x 20m	60 x 20m	60 x 20m	60 x 20m	60 X 20M
HT & CT Competitions	6.1	5.1	4.1	3.1	2 HT1	1 HT1		Adv HT1
	6.2	5.2	4.2	3.2	2 HT2	1 HT2	-	Adv HT2
'Pure' Dressage Competitions		5.1	4.1	3.1	2.1	1.1	A1	
	6.1	5.2	4.2	3.2	2.2	1.2	A2	-
	6.2	5.3	4.3	3.3	2.3	1.3	A3	
		5.4	4.4	3.4	2.4	1.4		

7. Arenas

7.1 Set Up

- 7.1.a Arena size must be in accordance with Rule 6.5.
- 7.1.b Arenas must be set out to the dimensions in figures 7.1 and 7.2.
- 7.1.c The arena should be level and separated from the public (including photographers and Videographers) by a distance all round of 15 metres where possible but at least by 10 metres. Bunting may be used when necessary to prevent intrusion.
- 7.1.d The arena should consist of a low fence, at least 0.3 metres high.
- 7.1.e Are to be placed a minimum of 4 metres apart, preferably 10 metres if room permits.
- 7.1.f Should be positioned where Judges do not face the sun.

7.2 Arena construction

- 7.2.a Arenas must be as safe as possible. Examples of material to be used include plastic chain (with intermittent breaks), plastic pipes or planks, ground markings and painted 10cmx2.5cm wooden boards placed on the ground at corners and markers.
- Event Organisers and Clubs should construct Dressage arenas without using the materials listed below.

- Driven-in stakes
- Unbreakable rope
- Unbreakable chain
- Unbreakable tape
- Line marking of rope on ground
- Thin poles on the ground

Rope and chain must not be continuous and must have intermittent breaks.

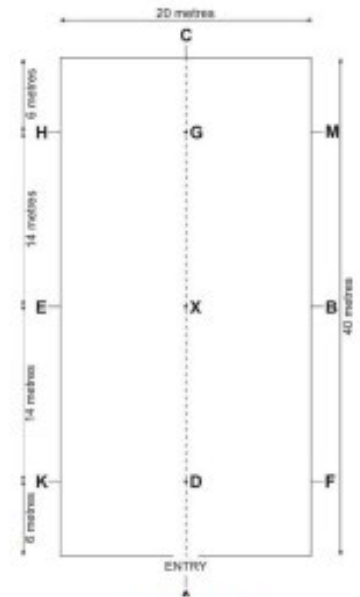
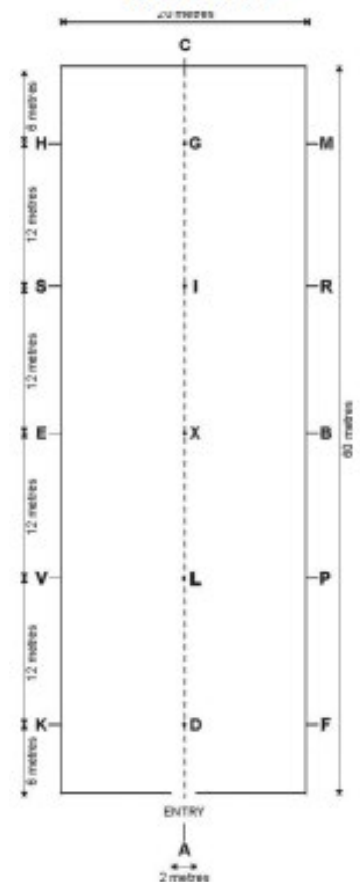


Figure 7.1 (above)
40 m x 20 m arena

Figure 7.2 (below)
60 m x 20 m arena



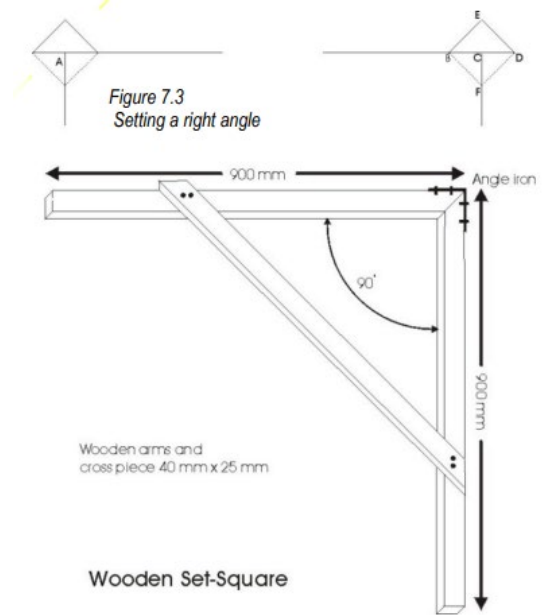
7.3 Markers

- 7.3.a The letters outside the enclosure must be placed 0.5 metres from the fence and clearly marked. It is desirable to place a special marker on the fence itself, level with, and in addition to, the letter concerned.
- 7.3.b The Judge must be positioned about 5 metres from the arena at C in accordance with Rule 5.1.b.iv
- 7.3.c The centre line must have the letter A in line (not off set) with C at least 10 metres (preferably 15 metres) back from the arena to allow horses a straight track to enter the arena.

7.4 Setting out an Arena

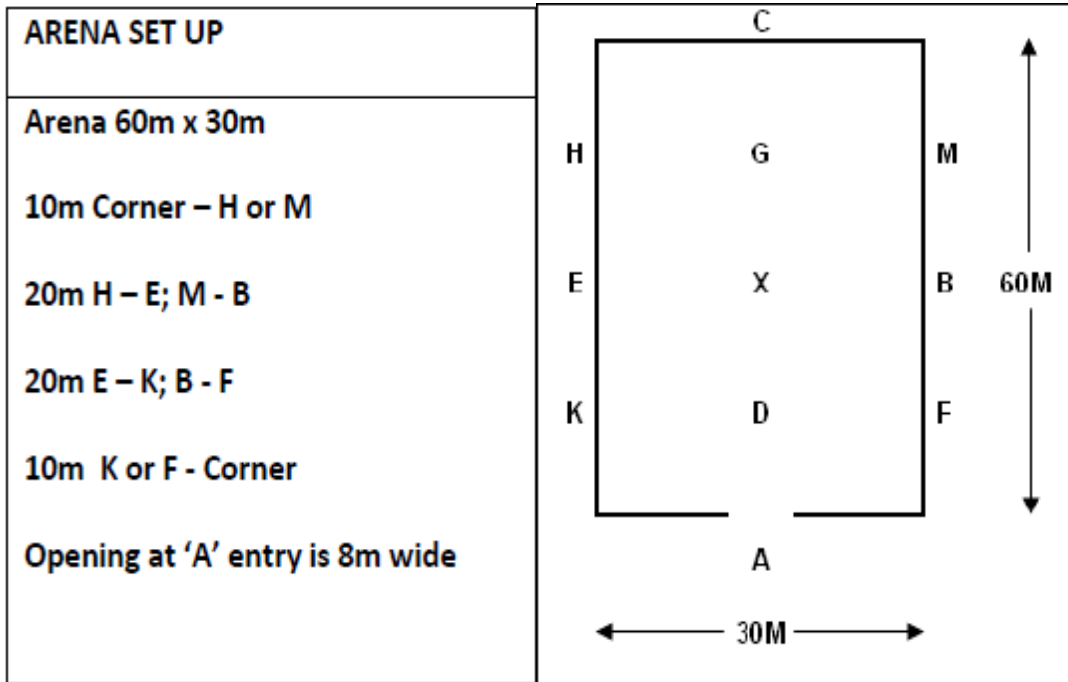
- 7.4.a Place a peg in the ground at one corner of the arena. Measure one long side of the arena and place a peg at that distance. These are pegs A and C in figure 7.3.
- 7.4.b Extend the line A–C by, say, three metres to D and measure back from C towards A the same distance, to B, putting temporary pegs at D and B.
- 7.4.c Using about a 10 metre length of twine tie a small loop at both ends, then find the exact middle and tie another loop there. Place one loop over the peg at B and the other loop over the peg at D. Holding the middle loop, tighten the string, first to the right and then, as a check, to the left, to obtain points E and F. Peg these points. If it has been done correctly, E, C and F will be a straight line at right angles to A–C. Extend this line 20 metres from C and the third corner of the arena is fixed. Repeat this procedure at A to find the fourth corner.
- 7.4.d Variant (a)
 - i. Using the above method for marking out a right angle, the setting out can be started from a chosen short side or the centre line for the arena if either is preferred as a base to work from.
- 7.4.e Variant (b)
 - i. Since the main problem in setting out is to establish lines at right angles, a useful tool for someone frequently engaged in this work is a wooden set square as shown in figure 7.4. If the apex of the set square is placed on the ground at a corner peg and one arm is sighted to lie along the base line, the other arm will point in a direction at right angles to it and the next corner peg can be sighted in this alignment.

- ii. Using a set square, some of the subsidiary measuring is eliminated. Furthermore, the ends of the long sides of the arena can be quickly laid out by using one or more lines prepared with small loops at each end through which suitable pegs can be inserted to pin them down as required.
- iii. Such prepared lines become stock material and should be checked for length each time they are brought out in case shrinking or stretching has occurred.



7.5 Arena for Flat Teams and Musical Ride

7.5.a Construction as per Rule 7.2 and markers placement as per Rule 7.3.



8. *Rider Training*

8.1 Gaining a Confident Approach to Riding a Dressage Test

- 8.1.a It is important to realise that Dressage means the training of the horse, and a test requires the rider to show the Judge how he is progressing with the training.
- 8.1.b In preparing for the test, the major part of the training should be outdoors in open areas. This is more natural for the horse thereby making it easier to retain his free forward movement. The various movements required by the test require practice but following the sequence of the test should be avoided.
- 8.1.c It is a very common fault for riders to work in the arena too much. This will become boring for the horse and so make it difficult to maintain impulsion. Another fault is to always ride the actual sequence of the test. If this is done the horse learns to anticipate what is coming next and it becomes very difficult to make him obedient and attentive to the aids. He takes short cuts and acts before the rider is ready. It is obvious to the Judge that the horse is acting on his own initiative and not on the initiative of the rider.
- 8.1.d In order to make horse and rider familiar with the markers, an arena should be used a few times only before the competition for about 15 minutes. The test should only be ridden in the set sequence on a few occasions, but the required movements and transitions are practiced in varying positions in the arena.
- 8.1.e During this work, the horse should always be going kindly and smoothly with a still head and even steps. If this is not so, then the rider is expecting too much of the horse, or the horse is not understanding what he should do. Something is wrong so it will be necessary to go back to riding quietly on a longer rein until the horse is settled and going quietly again. Then a fresh start is made, perhaps more gradually and with more careful riding.
- 8.1.f During training, the rider must learn how to enter the arena, salute, ride a circle, ride a half-circle, ride through the corners and ride correctly on the track, and how to leave the arena. He must learn to concentrate on the transitions, where to prepare the horse, where the transition should be carried out and the importance of smooth execution.

8.2 Competition Requirements

- 8.2.a Members are advised to read the [PCV Handbook of Bylaws](#) and [PCA Gear Rules](#) in addition to this rule book before competing.
- 8.2.b Before riding at a competition, the combination (horse and rider) must be graded and have satisfied all eligibility requirements. Gear check must also be undertaken. All of these requirements are in the [PCV Handbook of Bylaws](#).
- 8.2.c When riding the Dressage test, the horse should be taken to the arena going in a manner in which he will perform smoothly. The rider should not expect him to do more than he has successfully done in practice. He may lack impulsion, and hence contact on the bit, but it is hoped his performance will be quiet and obedient. If, on the other hand, the rider actually asks for more than has been successfully achieved in practice, the performance may appear to have more life but, because the rider is using the reins too strongly, thus restricting the movements of the horse, his head will be unsteady, and he will take uneven steps and there will be a lack of harmony between the horse and rider. Of the two, the first-mentioned horse would be penalised less than the second.

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- 8.2.d The rider must learn the test thoroughly and be familiar with the rules and conditions of the competition. When actually performing a test, he must have two things clearly in his mind—the movement he is performing, so that this is done to the very best of his ability, and the movement that comes next, so that he and the horse are ready to go smoothly into the transition. If anything should go wrong, it is no tragedy. The rider must forget about it and put his all into riding the next part of the test.
- 8.2.e If the rider pays attention to all the points detailed in this section, he will be able to enter the arena happily, knowing that he and his horse have undergone a thorough preparation and that they are both happy and confident in what they are about to do. This presents a pleasing picture of relaxed enjoyment of both horse and rider, which is expected by Judges, whatever the standard of the competition. In a test early in the training of the horse, such as a first pony club test, little more than this picture is expected.

8.3 Future Progression and Training

- 8.3.a As the standard of the rider increases, upgrading will be required. Refer to the PCV Handbook of Bylaws and PCV Grading Guidelines for grading requirements.
- 8.3.b As upgrading occurs, tests will increase in difficulty. The Judge will expect the horse to be more responsive to the aids, to engage the hindquarters better, accepting a light and soft contact on the bit. The paces must be executed with greater evenness and precision. Eventually the horse is asked for collected paces, where he must be really using his back and hindquarters to give him more elastic, brilliant and elevated movements.
- 8.3.c The instructor should encourage members to be content with entering simple tests first, only advancing to a higher level as the horse's training progresses. In this way the horse and rider are not over-faced (riding above their competency) and progress will be smooth, constant, and satisfactory.
- 8.3.d Further reading:
- Paces and Movements: Rule 9
 - [Dressage Tests](#) and [PCV Expected Standards](#):
 - The Training Scale – this can be found on the EA Dressage Rules – Section 7 Paces and Movements.

