

USEF Equitation Tests

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/RULES FOR JUDGE:

- Tests must be ridden either in a group or individually, the judge can only use tests specified in the USEF Handbook.
- The judge must provide instructions publically.
- In certain cases, the judge is allowed to “...ask riders to re-jump an abbreviated or shortened form of the original course” (USEF Rulebook, 612).
 - If a rider fails to return for a re-jump, they will be placed last of the competitors who were similarly called back to re-jump.
 - If all riders are called back to test, they all must remain in the ring until all riders have retested.
 - If more than one rider fails to return to the ring for a retest, they will be placed at the judge’s discretion.
- Trotting/Cantering through an in gate or out gate is not allowed. Any rider who trots/canters through an in/out gate will be eliminated.
- All jumps in an equitation test must have been jumped in the original course. These jumps also must be jumped in the same direction they were in the original course *unless otherwise specified*.

MOVEMENTS THAT MAY BE SELECTED BY THE JUDGE:

1. **Halt** (must be 4-6 seconds) or halt and **reinback**. If being tested in a group, riders will not be faulted if they do not walk immediately.
2. **Hand Gallop** -- to be used on the approach to a jump
3. **Figure eight** at trot, demonstrating change of **diagonals**.¹
4. Figure eight at canter on correct lead -- rider must demonstrate change of lead through a **simple lead change**.²
5. Work collectively or individually at walk, trot, or canter.
6. Jump low **fences** at both the trot and canter -- the max height and width is 3’ for horses, 2’ for ponies *but only in pony-specific classes*.
7. Riders may be questioned about basic horsemanship, **tack** & equipment, and **horse conformation**.

¹ See Figure 1.

² See Figure 1.

8. Riders may be asked to ride without stirrups, *but must be given the option to cross stirrups.*³
9. Riders may be asked to **dismount** and **remount** their horses. *This must be done individually.*⁴
10. Perform a **turn on the forehand**. This must be done at either the walk or the halt.
11. Figure eight at the canter, performing a **flying lead change.**⁵
12. Perform a serpentine at either the trot or the canter, demonstrating either simple lead changes or flying lead changes if at canter.⁶
13. Lead changes on a line, can be either simple or flying.
14. Switch horses.
15. **Counter canter** -- judge may ask rider to counter canter to a jump.
16. Perform a **turn on the haunches** from the walk
17. Perform a one minute ride **demonstration** -- judge must be notified of what movements rider intends to perform prior to demonstration.

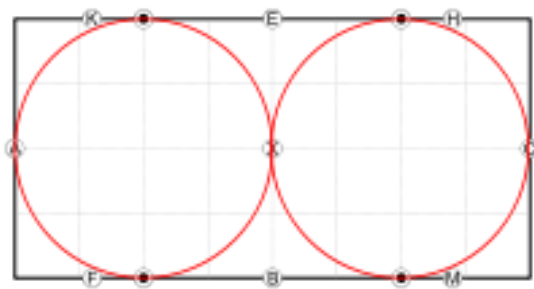


Figure 1.
Figure Eight Movement

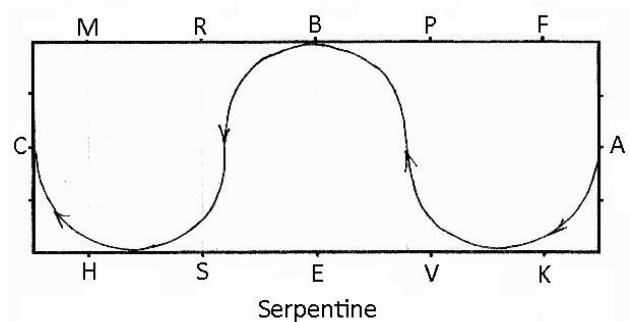


Figure 2.

³ Some horses may be spookier (scare more easily than others). Having stirrups bounce around might be something that startles certain horses. It is important to give riders this option so they have a fair chance at placing well and being as safe as possible.

⁴ This is for safety reasons.

⁵ See Figure 1.

⁶ See Figure 2.

USEF Terms Definitions

Halt - *verb* - to cause to stop; bring to a stop.

Hand Gallop - *noun* - an easily controlled gallop.

Figure Eight - *noun* - an exercise that was designed to develop the horse's suppleness to the bend, make them straighter, and improve their balance. A figure eight movement should be uniform and symmetrical, the two circles should be the same size.

Diagonal - *noun* - referring to a rider performing a posting trot, this means that a rider is posting (i.e. off the horse's back) and they are sitting when the horse's outside shoulder (i.e. closest to the rail) and inside hind leg (i.e. the closest to the middle of the ring) are on the ground. The rider is rising when the outside shoulder and inside hind leg are *moving forward*.

Lead - *noun* - when cantering, the horse's inside front leg will travel farther than the other legs, *leading* the rest of the body. If tracking left, the horse's left front leg should be reaching farther than the others, for example.

Simple Lead Change - *noun* - when a horse is on one lead, comes down to a trot, and then picks up the other lead.

Fence(s) - *noun* - a jump or jumps.

Tack - *noun* - a general term for the equipment that is on a horse. Could be referring to the saddle, the bridle, the girth, etc.

Horse Conformation - *noun* - the evaluation of the correctness of a horse's body; this involves bone structure, musculature, and body proportions in relation to one another.

Dismount - *verb* - to get off a horse

Mount or Remount - *verb* - to get onto a horse

Turn on the Forehand - *verb* - to ask a horse to remain stationary on their front legs, while moving laterally (i.e. crossing their legs over one another, asking horses to work through their backs) on their hind legs to change direction.

Flying Lead Change - *verb* - a change of lead without changing gait -- a rider will ask a horse to change their lead by shifting their balance during a moment of suspension, allowing a horse to switch their hind legs to the other lead followed by their front legs to the other lead.

Counter Canter - *verb* - to canter on the opposite lead of chosen direction. For example, a horse will counter canter on the right lead while tracking left.

Turn on the Haunches - *verb* - to ask a horse to remain stationary on their hind legs, while moving laterally (i.e. crossing their legs over one another, asking horses to work through their backs) on their front legs to change direction.

Demonstration - *verb* - a rider may perform a "demonstration" by performing a list of movements in front of a judge.

Reinback - *verb* - to backup in a controlled manner. The horse should no go below the forehand or above the contact.