



Dressage Optional Focus Area Skills Checklist

Member's name: _____

To become proficient at Dressage requires a great deal of patience and extensive practice. Developing the skill level seen in Olympic competition takes many years to achieve; the purpose of this checklist is to provide an ideal for 4-H members to work toward. Dressage training enables the horse to become more responsive and athletic in other areas of performance (e.g., trail, western, reining, cutting, roping, jumping, ranch work, etc.). Each level may take 2 or 3 years to complete; members should receive scores of at least 60 percent on their Level test before advancing.

Level 1

(Requires completion of the General Equitation Focus Area Skills Checklist, Level 1 and 2, first)

1. List at least five types of bits and four nosebands that are permitted in a dressage test (Training through Third Level).
2. Name four bits not allowed in a dressage test.
3. Name at least three pieces of equipment (excluding bits) not permitted in a dressage test.
4. What are the whip restrictions for a dressage test?
5. Describe how a day and gentleman salute the judge. When is this done?
6. List the proper clothing to be worn when riding a dressage test.
7. Explain the terms "calling a test" and "riding a dressage test".
8. Name and correctly spell at least four breeds that make good dressage horses.
9. Explain the following terms used in dressage tests or when practicing:

Bending	Smoothness	Acceptance of the bit
Contact	Submission	Balance during transitions
Flexibility	Suppleness	Regularity of gait
Harmony	Transitions	Freedom of gait
Impulsion	Effect of the aids	Roundness of gait
Relaxation	Tract left/right	On, above, behind the bit
Disobedience	Working trot	Error of the test
Evasion	Working canter	Straightness
Late	Free walk	
Resistance	Medium walk	

10. List four natural and three artificial aids for controlling a horse.
11. Name three health precautions you need to observe when attending a show.

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| 12. Correctly demonstrate these skills (<i>in order of progression</i>): | | |
| a. Properly saddle, unsaddle, and store tack. | | |
| b. Proper use of aids at a walk, working trot (rising and sitting), and cantering a 20-meter circle with smooth, calm transitions between each gait. | | |
| c. Execute a 20-meter circle at A or C and B or E, going both directions. | | |
| d. At a trot, turn onto centerline from A or C. Halt at X, salute (horse immobile). | | |

Level 2

Complete Level 1 before proceeding to level 2

1. Explain the following terms used in dressage test or while practicing:

Elasticity	Abrupt transitions	Riding through the corner
Disunited	Serpentine	Quality of the trot
Half-halt	Strung out	Bend through the circle
Free walk	Heavy on forehand	Falling in and out on circle
Half circle	Leaning on the bit	Tracking up
Immobility	Outside of horse	Hollow side
Rhythm	Passive and active	Stiff side

- | | Date Completed | Approved By |
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| 2. Describe what an effective seat is and why it is important. | | |
| 3. Describe the rider's most effective, correct skeletal position (include head, shoulder, chest, arms, elbow, wrists, hands, torso, hips, thighs, knees, calves, ankles, and feet). | | |
| 4. Describe a good conditioning program (include exercise and feeding) for your dressage horse. | | |
| 5. List at least four common types of lameness that affect dressage horses; describe appropriate prevention and treatments for each of these. | | |
| 6. What are the advantages of lounding your horse and being lounded on your horse at three different gaits: | | |
| 7. Specifically describe how to properly execute a canter depart. | | |
| 8. Why is a coefficient of two given to the free walk and medium walk? | | |
| 9. Explain the difference between a three-beat and four-beat canter. | | |
| 10. Explain what a half-halt is, why it is used, and when it is used. | | |
| 11. Identify the correct, fork, and chair sets; describe the good and bad points about each different seat. | | |
| 12. What are the four hand positions? Explain why one position is good, and why the others are not. | | |
| 13. Illustrate the difference between riding the corner on a 20-meter circle at C and following the track at C to M or H. | | |

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| 14. Correctly demonstrate these skills (<i>strive for consistency and perfection</i>): | | |
| a. Lounge your horse in a snaffle bit with side reins (or lounging cavesson). | | |
| b. Have an experienced person correctly lounge you on your own horse at all three gaits. | | |
| c. Execute the canter depart on both leads. | | |
| d. Demonstrate the six different ways of changing the rein. | | |
| e. Execute a three-loop serpentine at posting trot, showing correct changes of diagonal | | |

Level 3

Complete Level 2 before proceeding to level 3

1. Explain the following terms used in dressage tests or when practicing:

Cadence	Chewing the bit	Doubler at E and B
Tempo	Counter canter	Effect of the aids
Flat Canter	Crookedness	Falling into a transition
Flexion	Haunches in	Roundness of the back
Inactive	Medium trot	Shoulder in
Irregular	Uneven	Out the Shoulder
Lift	Restricted	Self-carriage
Chewing the reins out of hands		

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| 2. Why are the collective marks each scored with a coefficient of two? | | |
| 3. Describe how to correct a four-beat canter. | | |
| 4. Explain how to do a three, four, and five loop serpentine. | | |
| 5. Correctly demonstrate these skills (<i>strive for consistency and perfection</i>): | | |
| 6. a. Execute a three, four, and five loop serpentine at the trot. | | |
| 7. b. Execute a doubler a E and B. | | |
| 8. c. Execute a 20-meter circle at the trot, letting your horse gradually take the reins out of your hands. | | |
| 9. d. Execute a shallow serpentine, going both directions from F to X to M, and K to X to H at the working trot, sitting. | | |
| 10. e. Execute half-halts at the trot and canter. | | |

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