

ANATOMY OF USEF DRESSAGE TEST SHEETS

TRAINING THROUGH FOURTH LEVELS

by Leslie Raulin

Dressage tests (below FEI tests) used in the US are published by the US Dressage Federation (USDF, www.USDF.org) and US Equestrian (USEF, www.USEF.org). The USDF Introductory Level test sheets and the USEF Training through Fourth Level test sheets have a standard “anatomy” (format) that riders should understand and study. This document will explain the “anatomy” of USEF Training, First, Second, Third and Fourth level test sheets. The Introductory Level test sheets have a different “anatomy” so are discussed in a separate document. [Click here](#) to download these tests.

These test sheets are printed on 8½” x 14” (legal) paper. In the past they were printed on colored paper (Introductory = White, Training = Pink, First = Blue, Second = Yellow, Third = Lilac, Fourth = Green); however, white paper for all tests is now accepted. The tests have two pages, usually printed double-sided.

First Level test 3 will be used as an example test for this document. We will start with page 1.

Page 1



2019 USEF FIRST LEVEL TEST 1

PURPOSE

To confirm that the horse demonstrates correct basics, and in addition to the requirements of Training Level, has developed the thrust to achieve improved balance and thoroughness and maintains a more consistent contact with the bit.
All trot work may be ridden sitting or rising, unless stated.
READER PLEASE NOTE: Anything in parentheses should not be read.

INTRODUCE

10m half circle at trot; 15m circle in canter; lengthening of stride in trot and canter

ENTRY NO:

Conditions:
ARENA SIZE: Standard
AVERAGE RIDE TIME: 5:30
(from entry at A to final halt)
Suggested to add at least 2 min. for scheduling purposes

MAXIMUM PTS: 290



	TEST	DIRECTIVES	POINTS	COEFFICIENT	TOTAL	REMARKS
1.	A X	Enter working trot Halt, salute Proceed working trot				
2.	C E-X	Track left Half circle left 10m, returning to track at H				
3.	B-X	Half circle right 10m, returning to track at M				
4.	C Before C C	Circle left 20m in rising trot, allowing the horse to stretch forward and downward while maintaining contact Shorten the reins Working trot		2		
5.	H-P P	Change rein, lengthen stride in trot Working trot				
6.	A	Medium walk		2		
7.	V-R R	Change rein, free walk Medium walk		2		
8.	M C	Working trot Working canter left lead		2		
9.	H-V	Lengthen stride in canter				
10.	V	Circle left 15m Develop working canter in first half of circle				
11.	F-X-H X	Change rein Working trot				
12.	C	Working canter right lead		2		
13.	M-P	Lengthen stride in canter				
14.	P	Circle right 15m Develop working canter in first half of circle				
15.	A	Working trot				
16.	K-R R	Change rein, lengthen stride in trot Working trot				

Page 2



2019 USEF FIRST LEVEL TEST 1

17.	E X G	Half circle left 10m Down centerline Halt, salute	Bend and balance in half circle, regularly and quality of trot, willing, clear transition, straightness, attentiveness, immobility (min. 3 seconds)			
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Leave arena at A in free walk.

COLLECTIVE MARKS

GAITS (Freedom and regularity)	1	
IMPULSION (Desire to move forward; elasticity of the steps; suppleness of the back; engagement of the hindquarters)	2	
SUBMISSION (Willing cooperation; harmony; attention and confidence; acceptance of bit and aids; straightness; lightness of forehand and ease of movements)	2	
RIDER'S POSITION AND SEAT (Alignment; posture; stability; weight placement; following mechanics of the gait)	1	
RIDER'S CORRECT AND EFFECTIVE USE OF AIDS (Clarity; subtlety; independence; accuracy of test)	1	
FURTHER REMARKS:		
To be deducted		1st Time = 2 points 2nd Time = 4 points 3rd Time = Elimination
Errors of the course and omissions are penalized		
		SUBTOTAL:
		ERRORS: (-)
		TOTAL POINTS: (Max Points: 290)

Signature of Judge	Name of Judge	Points	Percent
Name of Rider		Final Score Maximum Pts: 290	
Name and Number of Horse		Date of Competition	
Name of Competition		Name of Competition	
United States Equestrian Federation, Inc. 2019 USEF FIRST LEVEL TEST 1			

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The top of page 1 has the **1 USEF logo** and the **2 USDF logo**. This is new for the 2019 tests. In the past the Introductory Level tests had only the USDF logo and the Training through Fourth Level tests had only the USEF logo. However, the actual test sheets indicate Introductory Level tests are still USDF tests and Training through Fourth level tests are still USEF tests.

The **3 test name** (in this example, 2019 USEF FIRST LEVEL TEST 1) is next on the top of page 1.

The **4 PURPOSE** of the level is next. Each level (training, first, second, etc.) has different proficiencies for the horse/rider pair, which are discussed on this part of the test. The rider should ensure the pair is capable of these proficiencies before riding the level in a show.

The **5 INTRODUCE** section lists dressage test patterns in the current test that were not in the previous test. In this example, First Level Test 1 introduces 10m half circle at trot, 15m circle in canter, and lengthening of stride at trot and canter; these test patterns were not in the previous test, Training Level Test 3. The next test, First Level Test 2 introduces leg yielding. The INTRODUCE section guides the rider as to which new skills are necessary to successfully ride the specific test.



The **6 ENTRY NO:** This box is used by show staff to enter the bridle number of the horse/rider pair that will be judged using the test sheet at hand.

The **7 Conditions** section describes:

- **ARENA SIZE:** Declares the arena size (small = 20m x 40m, standard = 20m x 60m) required for the test. Introductory and Training Level tests may be in a small or standard arena; the size for a particular show is determined by show management and should be stated in the show prize list.
- **AVERAGE RIDE TIME:** This is the average amount of time, in minutes and seconds, that the ride is expected to take from the time the horse/rider pair enter at A to the final halt. The time is not measured and there is no demerit for taking more or less time.
- **Suggested to add at least 2 min for scheduling purposes:** This statement is used by show staff during scheduling of the show ride times; it allows time for the judge to do the collective marks and other remarks. In this example, the average ride time is **5min 30sec** and the scheduling (administrative) time is **2min**; therefore, show staff should allow at least **7min 30sec** between the start of the current ride and the start of the subsequent ride.

The **8 MAXIMUM PTS** section has the maximum number of points achievable if a maximum score is earned for every movement and every collective mark. This number is used to calculate the final percentage earned by the horse/rider pair. In this example, the maximum points is **290**.

Top of Page 1

 1	 2
3 2019 USEF FIRST LEVEL TEST 1	5 INTRODUCE
4 PURPOSE To confirm that the horse demonstrates correct basics, and in addition to the requirements of Training Level, has developed the thrust to achieve improved balance and thoroughness and maintains a more consistent contact with the bit. All trot work may be ridden sitting or rising, unless stated. <i>READER PLEASE NOTE: Anything in parentheses should not be read.</i>	6 ENTRY NO:
	7 Conditions: ARENA SIZE: Standard AVERAGE RIDE TIME: 5:30 (from entry at A to final halt) Suggested to add at least 2 min. for scheduling purposes
	8 MAXIMUM PTS: 290

PAGE 1 MIDDLE

The middle of page 1 of the test has the test movements and associated information.

The **1 NUMBER** column gives the movement number – 1, 2, 3, etc. Each movement may encompass one or more test pattern(s) (gait change, turn, dressage exercise such as leg yield, etc.). Each movement receives one judge score.

The **2 LETTER** column gives the arena letter(s) where a test pattern is performed:

- One letter indicates where the pattern begins – A, C, etc.
- Two letters indicate where the pattern begins and ends – E-X, M-P, etc.
- Three letters indicated where the pattern starts, the letter it passes through, and the letter where it ends – M-X-K, H-X-F, etc.
- Some patterns begin before a letter (Before C, etc.) or between letters (Between C and M, etc.).

The **3 TEST** column indicates the test pattern(s) the horse/rider pair are to perform at the corresponding arena letter(s). For example:

- Proceed working trot
- Track left
- Medium walk

NOTE: Test patterns may also be called movements. This can get confusing!

The **4 DIRECTIVES** column provides the criteria by which the judge evaluates and scores each movement. Riders should study the directives very closely.

The **5 POINTS** column is where the judge's points for each movement is entered. When a horse/rider pair complete a movement, the judge says the points and the scribe writes the points in the appropriate points box. Points are 0-10 in 0.5 increments: 0 = Not executed 3 = Fairly bad 6 = Satisfactory 9 = Very good
1 = Very bad 4 = Insufficient 7 = Fairly good 10 = Excellent
2 = Bad 5 = Marginal 8 = Good

The **6 COEFFICIENT** column may or may not have a number in it. If a movement has a coefficient, it is considered a more important movement so is given more "weight" in the test results by multiplying the judge points by the coefficient. For example, movement 4 has a coefficient of 2; if the judge points was 6, the scorers multiply 6 x 2 to give the **7 TOTAL** of 12. The scorers write 12 in the appropriate TOTAL box.

The **8 REMARKS** column has remarks said by the judge and written by the scribe. The remarks may include terms in the 2019 USDF Glossary of Judging Terms ([click here](#) to download). Riders use the remarks to know what was not done correctly and to improve their riding and test scores.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
	TEST			DIRECTIVES	POINTS	COEFFICIENT	TOTAL	REMARKS	
Movement	1.	A X	Enter working trot Halt, salute Proceed working trot	Pattern Pattern Pattern	Regularity and quality of trot; willing, clear transitions; straightness; attentiveness; immobility (min. 3 seconds)				
	2.	C E-X	Track left Half circle left 10m, returning to track at H		Regularity and quality of trot; shape and size of half circle; bend; balance; straightness				
	3.	B-X	Half circle right 10m, returning to track at M		Regularity and quality of trot; shape and size of half circle; bend; balance; straightness				
	4.	C Before C C	Circle left 20m in rising trot, allowing the horse to stretch forward and downward while maintaining contact Shorten the reins Working trot		Forward and downward stretch over the back into a light contact, maintaining balance and quality of trot; bend; shape and size of circle; willing, clear transitions		2		
				Moderate lengthening of frame and					

The bottom of page 1 has the copyright designation and address for **1 USEF** and **2 USEF**.

The **3 paragraph** discusses document reproduction and disclaimer for document errors. The USDF and USEF dressage tests are available online ([click here](#)) for use in dressage schooling shows, USEF licensed / USDF recognized dressage shows (these shows pay a fee for each test ridden in the show), and for test practice at the barn.

1

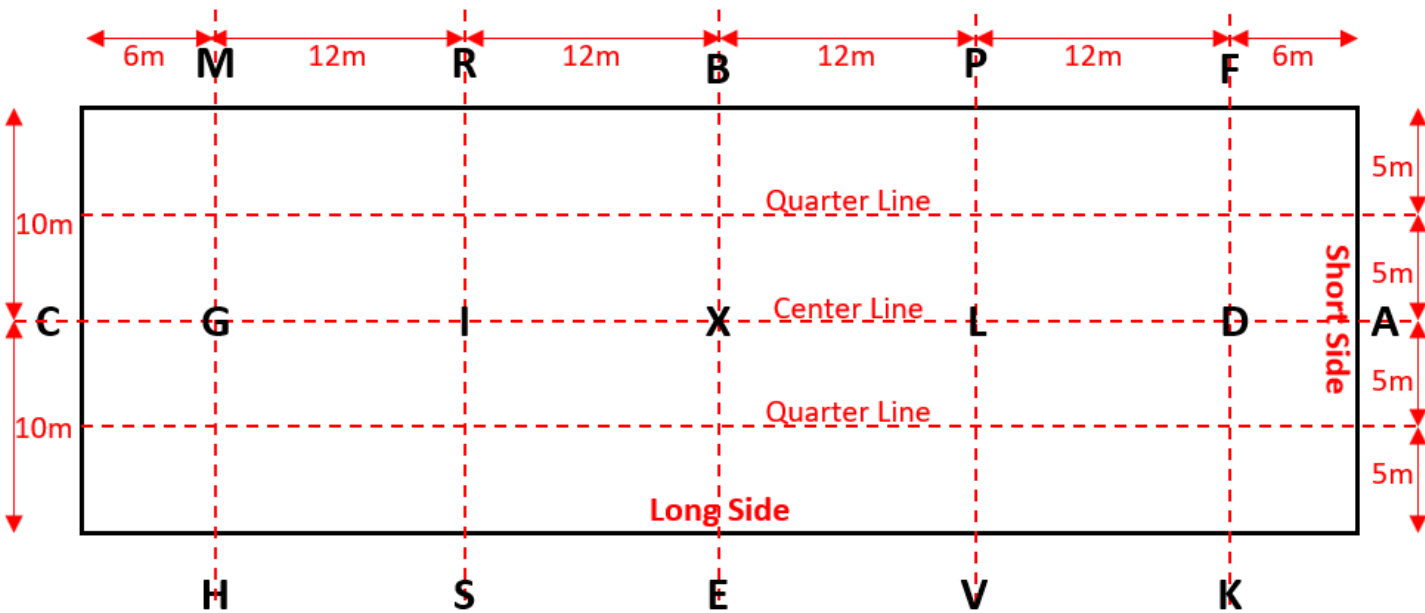
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20m x 60m Arena (Standard Arena, Large Arena)




(May be used for Introductory and Training Level tests. All other tests must use the 20m x 60m arena.)


The top of page 2 has the **1 USEF logo**, **2 USDF logo**, and the **3 test name**, as for page 1.

Additional **4 movements** may also be on the top of page 2. For Training Level tests, all the movements are on page 1; for First through Fourth Level tests, there are one or more movements on the top of page 2.

The **5 last box** has the directions “Leave arena at A in free walk.” These directions are at the end of all USDF and USEF tests.



1

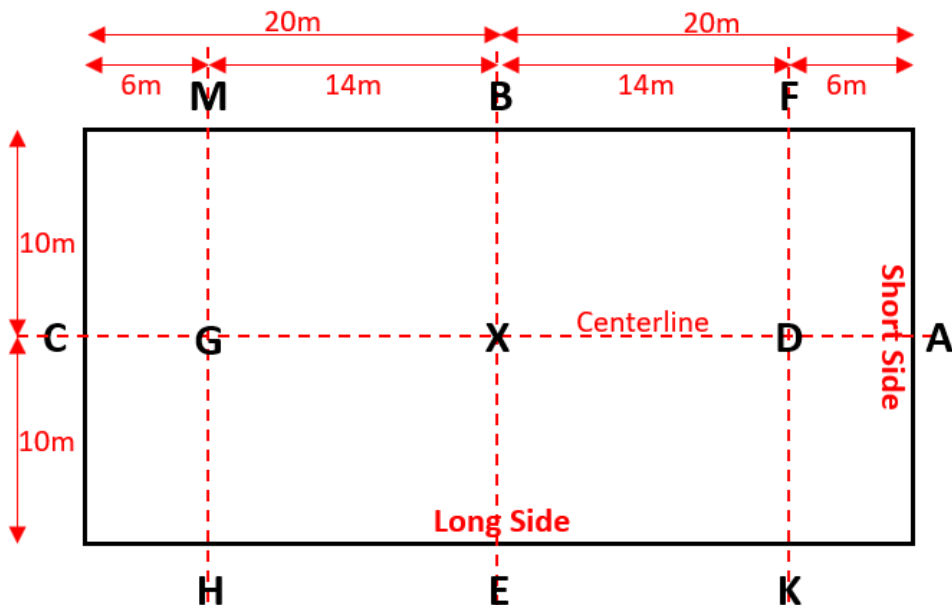


2

3 2019 USEF FIRST LEVEL TEST 1

4	17.	E X G	Half circle left 10m Down centerline Halt, salute	Bend and balance in half circle, regularity and quality of trot; willing, clear transition; straightness; attentiveness; immobility (min. 3 seconds)			
5	Leave arena at A in free walk.						

20m x 40m Arena (Small Arena)



(May be used for Introductory and Training Level tests. All other tests must use the 20m x 60m arena.)

The top middle of page 2 has the **1 COLLECTIVE MARKS**. Collective marks are additional points determined by the judge that are not based on each ridden movement; instead, they are based on an overall impression for specific criteria (gaits, impulsion, submission, rider's position and seat, rider's correct and effective use of the aids). The criteria are defined on the test sheet. As with movements, collective marks have **2 points**, **3 coefficients**, **4 totals**, and **5 remarks**. The judge writes the points and the remarks.

The **6 FURTHER REMARKS** box usually contains further remarks from the judge. If the judge feels the movement and collective marks remarks provide sufficient information, the further remarks box may be empty. However, most judges provide overall impression comments that point out the good aspects of the test performance and areas that need improvement. The judge writes the further remarks.

The **7 SUBTOTAL** box is completed by scorers. The subtotal is the total of all TOTALS boxes on the test (movements and collective marks).

The **8 ERRORS** box is completed by scorers. It is based on errors of course and/or omissions that are annotated on the test (usually written by the scribe in red ink). An **9 explanation of errors** is on the test sheet. If there was one error, a -2 is written in the errors box. If there were two errors, a -6 is written in the errors box (-2 for first error plus -4 for second error). If there were three errors, the horse/rider pair is eliminated. In schooling shows, the judge may allow the ride to continue; however, the ride is not scored and no class place or ribbon is awarded.

The **10 TOTAL POINTS** box is the subtotal minus the errors. It is calculated and written by scorers. Riders should verify a correct calculation and report any errors to show management before the end of the show.

COLLECTIVE MARKS		2	3	4	5
1	GAITS (Freedom and regularity)		1		
	IMPULSION (Desire to move forward; elasticity of the steps; suppleness of the back; engagement of the hindquarters)		2		
	SUBMISSION (Willing cooperation; harmony; attention and confidence; acceptance of bit and aids; straightness; lightness of forehand and ease of movements)		2		
	RIDER'S POSITION AND SEAT (Alignment; posture; stability; weight placement; following mechanics of the gaits)		1		
	RIDER'S CORRECT AND EFFECTIVE USE OF AIDS (Clarity; subtlety; independence; accuracy of test)		1		
6	FURTHER REMARKS:				
9 To be deducted Errors of the course and omissions are penalized	1st Time = 2 points		7 SUBTOTAL:		
	2nd Time = 4 points		8 ERRORS: (-)		
	3rd Time = Elimination		10 TOTAL POINTS: (Max Points: 290)		

ANATOMY OF USEF DRESSAGE TEST SHEETS - TRAINING THROUGH FOURTH LEVELS

PAGE 2 BOTTOM MIDDLE

The bottom middle of page 2 has two parts, (1) test and show information and (2) Final Score.

TEST AND SHOW INFORMATION:

The **1 USEF and test names** are first.

The **2 Name of Competition**, **3 Date of Competition**, **4 Name and Number of Horse**, and **5 Name of Rider** are completed by show management. The information may be provided on a printed sticker.

FINAL SCORE:

The **6 Points** is the FINAL POINTS entered on the top middle section of page 2. The value is entered by scorers.

The **7 Percent** is the Points divided by the **8 Maximum Pts** (in this example, 290). For example, if the Points was 185, the Percent is $185 / 290 = 63.793\%$. The Percent is taken to three decimal places using standard rounding conventions. The Percent is calculated and written by scorers. Riders should verify a correct calculation and report any errors to show management before the end of the show.

The **9 Name of Judge** is written on this line by show management. If the Name of Judge is included on a test and show information sticker, this line may be left blank.

The **10 Signature of Judge** is located on this line. If there is no signature, the test sheet is not complete may not be accepted as proof of qualification for awards, etc. Riders should report to show management if the signature is absent.

The diagram illustrates the layout of the bottom middle section of a USEF Dressage Test Sheet. It features a light blue background with a white border. The text is oriented vertically, reading from right to left. The fields are numbered 1 through 10 in red circles:

- 1** United States Equestrian Federation, Inc.
2019 USEF FIRST LEVEL TEST 1
- 2** Name of Competition
- 3** Date of Competition
- 4** Name and Number of Horse
- 5** Name of Rider
- 6** Points
- 7** Percent
- 8** Final Score
Maximum Pts: 290
- 9** Name of Judge
- 10** Signature of Judge

The bottom of page 2 is similar to the bottom of page 1.

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If you find any errors in this document, or you need a topic further explained, please contact Leslie Raulin at LeslieRaulin@gmail.com. Thanks!

THE END

