



UNITED STATES DRESSAGE FEDERATION™

USDF Guide for Scribes

Judge and Scribe: A Team

- Judges depend upon the scribe to quickly, accurately, legibly, and quietly record the scores and comments made about each ride. Judges are grateful for the volunteer help and are usually willing to answer any questions a scribe might have with respect to the job of scribing.

Conversations between Judge and Scribe

- It is the judge's responsibility to judge the test. It is not appropriate for the scribe to comment on the judge's decision, nor to question that decision. It is what the judge sees that matters, so if a judge does not see a mistake, don't comment. In addition, any comments (written or verbal) made by the judge while in the judge's box are strictly between the judge and the rider. Never carry these conversations outside the judge's box.
- Never volunteer information about competitors or their horses, even if asked by the judge.
- Wait for the judge to set the tone as to whether conversation will be encouraged between rides or on breaks. Most judges will initiate some small talk, but some need time to review tests or just clear their minds. While it is tempting for the scribe to ask questions about their own riding or a particular horse problem, please don't do it!

Watching the Test

- Scribing takes concentration to accurately record the scores and comments and errors. It is not possible for a scribe to watch the test in its entirety while recording the scores and comments.

The Scoring Process

- The scribe must quickly and legibly record only the comments the judge makes, without adding or deleting anything. All judges have their own style for giving comments and scores on a ride. Some judges give so many comments that the scribe may have difficulty keeping up. In this case, the scribe should be sure to record the score as soon as it is given, and then continue with the comments.
- A scribe that is new to the job may confirm the movement number occasionally with the judge. Most judges will not mind helping scribes in this way. In the event that a judge omits a score, the scribe can again confirm the movement number with the judge and allow him to deal with the omission at the time or at the end of the test.

The Scores

- The judge's scores will range from 0 to 10, with a 10 being the maximum (best) score that can be awarded for any one movement. To more heavily emphasize a movement, some are "weighted" with a coefficient of two (2). The scribe need not worry about coefficients. All multiplication will be handled later by the scorers.
- Remember that the scores are made in half-points. This means that all scores must have a decimal written with either .5 or .0 (eg. 6.5 or 6.0). This is a requirement per USEF Rules.
- Scores are written in the first column of boxes on the scoresheet. The second column is for coefficients, which are pre-printed on the test, and the third column is for the total points earned on each movement. Totals are left for the scorer to fill out; the scribe is only responsible for one column: POINTS.
- Collective marks at the end of each test and a few additional general comments may be dictated to the scribe or written by the judge.

Errors

- An error occurs when a rider goes off course (rides the wrong pattern) or in some way does not perform the movement as prescribed. An error is marked in addition to the regular score. The points given for the movement where the error occurred are put into the "points" box, as usual. The word ERROR is put under "remarks" (room permitting) or under "directives."
- The scribe should circle the word ERROR to draw attention to it. For the first error, two points are deducted; for the second, four points; for the third, the competitor is eliminated (although the judge may allow the rider to continue). The total deduction will be entered by the scorer at the bottom of the page.
- Use of the voice (speaking to the horse or clucking) is not an error of test, but is a fault involving the deduction of 2 marks. simply write "use of voice" in the Remarks column for the movement in which it occurs. Circle this also to draw attention. The judge will tell you how to handle the 2-point deduction.
- Errors are rare in Freestyle tests, if they do occur; they are recorded under the final scores for Technical Execution.

Before the Show

- Familiarize yourself with basic dressage terms and how to spell them. Study the commonly used abbreviations listed at the end of this guide.
- When asked to scribe, the individual should inquire with show management about which tests they will be assigned to scribe and study each of the tests before the show. Never accept a position to scribe for a judge that you will compete before later in the competition.

The Day of the Show

- The scribe should arrive at least one-half hour early and check in with show management. Dress in neat, comfortable sportswear and be prepared for predicted weather conditions.
- For some large competitions, there may be a dress code for scribes and volunteers. Check with the volunteer coordinator to see what the dress requirements are for each competition.
- The secretary or volunteer coordinator will indicate the arena and judge to which the scribe has been assigned.
- Ask about the judging materials for that ring: score sheets, pen, red pen, updated program. You may need to carry these materials to the judge's box.
- Ask about the location of the restrooms.
- Once at the judge's box, the scribe should organize the work area and check for all proper materials:
 - Several ink pens, including a red pen to mark errors
 - Program to follow the order to go with updated list of scratches and additions.
 - Bell or whistle and a watch set to official show time.
 - Stopwatch to time musical rides or the 45-second entry limit.
 - Packet of scoresheets. Check to make sure that it is the packet for the judge and arena assigned.
 - Check the order of scoresheets against the order of go, and make sure any additional horses have been assigned scoresheets. There should be blank tests in the packet available for this purpose. If the tests are not in the order of go, a ride may be scribed on the wrong test causing confusion for the office and riders.
 - Make sure that the tests in the packet match the tests scheduled in the program.
 - Check that there is an extra copy of each different test for the judge to follow as the ride progresses.
 - Make sure that all loose items (papers, cups, tissue, etc.) are anchored down with a heavy object so that nothing blows or rustles in a sudden gust of wind.
 - Make sure to put your cell phone on mute or vibrate before the first test starts.

When the judge arrives, introduce yourself, and take the time to ask any questions. Let the judge know that you have checked the items discussed above. Some judges will take this opportunity before the first class to give the scribe an idea of how comments and scores will be given. Be sure the judge is allowed time to get settled, look at the program, and review the first test to be judged.

The Class Begins

As each horse warms up by working around the arena before the ride begins, the scribe must check the horse's number to ensure it is the same number marked on the test sheet and class list or program.

- Be sure to write the competition number you see on the bridle tag in the box in the upper right hand corner of the test. This is the only way to assure that the horse competing is the same as the one on the test sheet. You may also want to add the color of the horse as a note to help identify the horse in case there is a mix-up with the scoresheets. The judge will instruct you if you may ask rider for the competition number if the number is not readily visible or the judge is occupied in finishing the last test.
- Always write the scores and comments in PEN. Pencils may not be used. Use a RED pen when making deductions for errors.
- Judges will tell the scribe how the test is to be scored. Many judges specify 'comment' first and then the score. Some judges do the opposite. Be certain to clarify which method the judge prefers to use.
- Be certain to write down EXACTLY what the judge says. Scribes may not paraphrase. It is important to convey precisely what the judge's comments are so the rider can understand the scores. If time allows, scribes should write out the complete comment. Another option to abbreviations is to leave out the vowels in longer words. The rider must be able to interpret the judge's comments correctly. Also, ask the judge if they allow abbreviations. Some do not.
- If the numbers do not match, alert the judge to the problem and attempt to identify the horse and rider who have presented themselves and quickly find the right scoresheet for that horse, if available.
- The judge may check to be sure that the correct movement is being scored. If the judge asks "are you on movement # 3?", either respond in the affirmative or tell which movement you are writing. This will allow the judge to adjust and provide the proper comment and score for the movement. Corrections can be addressed at the end of the test.
- If a ride scratches (cancels) or just does not show up, write "scratch" or "no show" on the score sheet (on the label, if there is one) and turn it in to the runner with the other score sheets. This way the scorer will not hold up the posting of class scores due to waiting for another dressage test.
- After the ride is complete, make sure there is a score in every box. Make sure each test is signed by the judge before it is sent to the scorer. Any change of a score on the test should be initialed by the judge.
- Check off each horse on the program as it completes the test. Keep an eye on the scheduled time, and if the judge requests it, inform the judge whenever the show is running behind by more than a few minutes.
- As the day progresses, the scribe should check for scheduled breaks and possible moves from arena to arena. Check the program and the packet of tests to determine if the packet moves with the judge or stays with a particular arena.

- If the runner has not picked up all the scoresheets, the scribe is responsible for delivering the scoresheets to the scorer during a break between classes, at lunch, and at the end of the day. Never leave completed scoresheets in the judge's box unattended.

Special Directions for Freestyle Scribes:

Scribes new to freestyle, should look over the freestyle scoresheet and become familiar with where the scores and comments are recorded.

In freestyle tests, movements are not done in a particular order, the scoresheets are organized by gait with a bold line separating the gaits (walk, trot, and canter). *Halts* and *Rhythm, energy and elasticity* are found at the bottom of the Compulsory Elements & Preliminary Marks.

Left and right for each movement are also in bold. This will help you find the correct box quickly when the judge gives a score. Riders may perform particular movements more than once. You will need to record the score and any comment for each attempt. Make the marks for the scores small since there maybe multiple scores per movement box.

What to bring to the ring:

- Pen and clip board
- Scoresheet(s)
- Class list
- Stopwatch or cell phone (to time tests).

Be prepared to:

- Time the test if asked. Timing can be done with a cell phone or a stopwatch provided by the competition management. Freestyles are timed from the move off after the first Halt/Salute to the final Halt/Salute. There is no deduction for being under time but a penalty on the artistic side for being overtime.
- Ask the judge how they prefer to handle Artistic Impression, they may want to complete that section themselves. The judge may ask you to make some general notes on the artistic side (for example-bold entry music).
- Finalize the movement score. At the end of the test, you and the judge will need to work quickly to enter the final score for each movement in the *Judges Marks* column.
- Make sure there is a final score in every box as well as the collectives and artistic scores.
- Starting for the 2019 test cycle, errors will be given for posting the trot when sitting is required and for failure to salute at the halt. These should be recorded under the totals for Technical execution.

The Scoresheet:

There are two sections to the freestyle score sheet, the Technical Execution and the Artistic Impression. In freestyle tests, movements are not done in a particular order. The judge will make the final decision on how to average the scores for a final mark. The judge has the option of filling out the Artist side of the scoresheet or dictating it to the scribe.

Additional information and scoresheets for Freestyles are available on the USDF website.

Special Directions for Equitation Classes:

Equitation classes are performed in a group not to exceed 25 riders. You will be asked to stand with your judge. Ask the judge how they would like you to record their comments. This may vary from judge to judge.

What to bring to the ring:

- Pen and clip board
- Clean paper for notes
- Scoresheet(s)
- Class list

Be prepared to:

- Take notes and scores for each box
- Write small, there could be several comments
- The scoresheet will not be posted, so notes can be brief
- The notes may be referred to by the judge when he talks with each rider at the end of the class
- Place rider numbers on the score sheet. It may be helpful to also add some identifying feature, i.e. chestnut white socks, or brown jacket, small rider
- While the class is running, you may be asked to identify the rider number and put the notes in the appropriate box on the score sheet as well as a number
- You may be asked to call out the judge's instruction for the class. i.e. where to go, what gait to be in, tell them the additional test movements, when to line up

The Scoresheet:

The scoresheet contains columns for Rider number, Walk, Trot, Canter, Additional tests, Total Score, and Place. Judges may ask you to divide the trot box into rising and sitting. The judge will give you comments for each gait and additional tests, as well as a score for each gait and the Total Score in percentage form. If the final score average is 7.4, it would be 74%. All numbers can be in decimals, .1, .2, .3, .4 etc. The judge usually does the math and the placing. Ask the judge what they prefer. Some judges prefer you to take notes on paper and transcribe it neatly on the score sheet. The finished scoresheet should be sent to the show office/scoring. Make sure the judge has signed the score sheet. Additionally you may be asked to help give out the ribbons depending on the competition.

Additional information and scoresheets for Equitation are available on the USDF website.

Special Directions for Young Horse Classes:

Young Horse Classes differ from regular dressage classes. There may be more than one judge in the booth depending on the level of competition. For these competitions, the judges will discuss the movements and one judge will be selected to communicate the comments they wish the scribe to record. Scribes need to be patient and when the judges have come to an agreement, they will tell the scribe what to write and where. More experienced Young Horse scribes may be able to summarize the judges' comments with less guidance from the judges.

What to bring to the ring:

- Pen and clip board
- Clean paper for notes
- Scoresheet
- Class list

Be Prepared to:

- Not give scores for each movement.
- Familiarize yourself with the scoresheet and understand the scoring process prior to the competition. The comments may jump around and not be given in a specific order.
- Write small and start at the top of the box. More comments may be added as the test progresses.
- Try to keep an eye on the test to have an idea of where the next comment may be recorded.
- Write down the number (7) but not yet the .0 as they may adjust that number as ride develops. At beginning, we see the quality of gaits but they could improve, then we can adjust score to .5 or more depending how the horse is improving during ride.
- Stay calm and alert during discussions, and keep all comments made confidential.

The Scoresheet:

- There are no boxes for individual scores and comments. All comments and score will be given in the five categories at the bottom of the scoresheet.

Additional information and scoresheets for Young Horse Classes are available on the USDF or FEI website.

Special Directions for Sport Horse Classes:

Sport Horse classes include both riding classes and in-hand classes. Horses in-hand may be shown individually or as a group depending on the class. All horses shown in Sport Horse riding classes (Sport Horse Prospect Under Saddle and/or Materiale) are shown in a group. The judge and you will be in the ring with the horses for most classes. Because of this, safety is your highest priority at all times. When horses are shown in-hand, the judge will likely have you stand in one place while they move around the horses. This procedure minimizes the number of people moving around for safety. Always be aware of where the horse is and what direction they are traveling. The judge will provide you with comments to write on the scoresheet and will tell you which section to place the comments. Sometimes the judge will give all the scores at the end and other times they will give the scores as the horse is shown. In the riding classes the judge and you will either stand just outside the arena or in the middle of the arena per the judge's preference. The judge will give you comments and/or scores to record as they are watching the horses being ridden.

What to Wear to the Ring:

- Pants not skirts
- Shoes that are comfortable to stand in for long periods of time and protect your feet (no open top shoes)
- Hat and/or sunglasses if outside
- Coat if cold or raining
- Do not wear clothes that will flap, blow in wind

What to Bring to the Ring:

- Pen(s) and two clipboards (one for the judge)
- Pad of paper for notes
- Scoresheet(s) – note some shows will have the scoresheets pre-labeled and others won't. Be sure to put actual bridle number on the scoresheet.
- Two Class lists (one for you and one for the judge)
- Sport Horse scoresheet instructions-if needed

Be Prepared To:

- Be aware of horse's location at all times, even when writing- you may have to move in a hurry
- Write comments and scores for each box as instructed by the judge
- Write small, there could be several comments
- Double check that the scoresheet matches the class being judged
- Put the actual bridle number of the horse on the scoresheet
- During riding classes – judge will often use description of horses instead of numbers for reference during the class

The Scoresheet:

There are several dressage sport horse scoresheets. Be sure that you have the specific scoresheet for each class being judged. If you aren't familiar with the scoresheets have the show secretary or manager review them with you before the show starts. Individual scoresheets are used for each horse in classes where horses are shown one at a time. These scoresheets will be given to the competitor after the class is complete. These classes include Dressage Sport Horse Prospect In-Hand, Dressage Sport Horse Breeding Stock, Individual Breed Classes (this class uses the SH Prospect In-hand scoresheet) and Adult Amateur/Jr/YR Handler classes. There are also group classes that have scoresheets specific to them. In these classes 2-3 horses will come into the ring as a group and be judged together on a scoresheet (these classes include Breeders Group, Get of Sire, Produce of Dam, Family Group, Dam and Produce). The scoresheet used for these classes is titled Group Classes Scoresheet. There will be one scoresheet for each group presented and these will be given to the competitors after the class is complete. Championship classes have a master scoresheet with all horses listed on one page. The judge and you will stand in the middle of the ring for these classes. The horses are placed only and not given scores. These scoresheets will not be given to the competitors.

Riding classes include Sport Horse Prospect Under Saddle and Materiale. Both of these classes have their own scoresheets. One Under Saddle Scoresheet is used for each individual horse, even though they are in the ring together. Organization is paramount with these scoresheets. They will be given to the competitor after the class is complete. However, at the discretion of show management this class can be judged without individual scoresheets when multiple horses are entered. When this is the case, the master scoresheet is usually used. One Materiale scoresheet is used for all horses entered in the same class. Only scores are given, no comments. Some judges will have you take a few notes on the notepad during this class for them to refer to when speaking to the riders at the end of the class. When putting numbers on the materiale scoresheet you should write quite small as the judge may give multiple scores for the gaits of each horse during the class and then make a final decision when the class is completed. This scoresheet is usually not given back to the competitors – but some shows may provide copies of scoresheet with other horse's scores blacked out, or a printout from the competition's scoring software with individual horse's scores.

The judge will provide comments relating to a horse's conformation, individual gaits and overall impression for you to write on the scoresheets. Abbreviations are fine but must be understandable. The finished scoresheet should be given to the show office/scoring (usually a runner will retrieve the scoresheet). Make sure the judge has signed the score sheet and there is a score in every box requiring such.

Additionally, you may be asked to help give out the ribbons depending on the competition.

Additional information and scoresheets for sport horse can be found on the USDF website.

Please note: If time allows, scribes should write out the complete comment. Another option to the abbreviations on the following page is to leave out the vowels in longer words. Remember, the rider must be able to interpret the judge's comments correctly.



UNITED STATES DRESSAGE FEDERATION™

USDF USDF Approved Scribe Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning	Abbreviation	Meaning
A	dressage letter "A"	L, l	left
@	at	<	less
ang	angle	>	more
attn	attention	ltr	letter
bal	balance	LF	left front
b/f, b/4	before	lg	large
bend/bnd	bending	LH	left hind
btr	better	outs	outside
↑ bit	above bit	pir	pirouette
betw	between	poll ↓	poll low
C	dressage letter "C"	poll ↑	poll high
cdnce/cad	cadence	pos	position
cant	canter	reg	regular
cntr, c-line	centerline	res, resist	resistance
CL	centerline	resis	resistance
O	circle	R	right
O□	circle square	rhy	rhythm
coll	collected	RH	right hind
cnnectn	connection	rush	rush, rushed
crkd	crooked	satis	satisfactory
dpt	depart	serp	serpentine
diag	diagonal	sh/in	shoulder-in
disob	disobedience	sh-in	shoulder-in
eng	engage	sl, slt	slightly
NRG	energy	sm	small
Ext	extended	str	straight
ext	extension	□	square
f/hand	forehand	Tnge out	tongue out
4hd	forehand	thru	through
forw	forward	trans	transition
gd	good	tr	trot
½ pass	half-pass	TOH	turn on haunches
hchs	haunches	TOFnd	turn on forehand
h-in	haunches in	unstd hd	unsteady head
hd tlt	head tilt	vert	vertical
h/leg	hindlegs	v	very
imm	immobile	wvng	weaving
impul	impulsion	w/	with
inattn	inattention	tran ↑	up transition
inconsist	inconsistent	tran ↓	down transition
irreg	irregular	X	dressage letter "X"
lks	lacks		
lack imp	lacks impulsion		
lat	lateral		