

All riding requirements must be met with the student demonstrating a safe, basic balanced position: heels down, eyes up, quiet hands, and a line running from the head through the shoulder and hip to the heel.

NOTES:



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A Progression of Horsemanship Skills

STUDENT'S NAME: _____

LEVEL ONE - RED

Completed: _____

- ☐ Brush, pick hooves, saddle and bridle, with assistance only if necessary, demonstrating awareness of basic horse safety.
- ☐ Mount and dismount independently (with mounting block if needed).
- ☐ Perform warm-up stretches independently.
- ☐ Perform an emergency dismount at the halt and walk.
- ☐ Halt by disengaging horse's hindquarters ("one-rein stop"), once on each rein.
- ☐ Demonstrate a pulley rein and a safety seat.
- ☐ Shorten and lengthen reins correctly.
- ☐ Perform walk-halt transitions, maintaining balanced position.
- ☐ Demonstrate the following maneuvers at walk:
 - ☐ *Change of direction across diagonal*
 - ☐ *Half-circle reverse*
 - ☐ *Half-turn*
 - ☐ *Large circle*
- ☐ Drop stirrups and pick up again, without looking down, at the halt.
- ☐ Ride in 2-point position at the walk.
- ☐ Ride simple ground pole course (3-5 fences) at walk, demonstrating jumping position and good approaches.
- ☐ Ride on the rail at a posting trot, once around in each direction.

LEVEL TWO - YELLOW

Completed: _____

- ☐ Tack and untack independently, in twenty minutes or less.
- ☐ Adjust stirrups and girth while mounted.
- ☐ Perform an emergency dismount at the trot.
- ☐ Demonstrate use of disengagement and pulley rein by halting horse from trot.
- ☐ Ride smooth walk-trot transitions, maintaining balanced position.
- ☐ Demonstrate knowledge and awareness of posting diagonals.
- ☐ Demonstrate the following maneuvers at walk and trot:
 - ☐ *Large circle*
 - ☐ *Figure-8*
 - ☐ *Serpentine*
 - ☐ *Half circle, half-turn and diagonal with change of posting diagonal*
- ☐ Ride USDF Intro Test A or B, showing knowledge of elementary dressage terms and figures.
- ☐ Ride on the longe at walk and trot without stirrups and reins.
- ☐ Drop stirrups and pick up again, without looking down, at the walk.
- ☐ Ride posting and sitting trot without stirrups, once around arena.
- ☐ Ride in 2-point position on the flat at walk and trot, developing ability to remain balanced independent of hands.
- ☐ Ride grid of trot poles, demonstrating secure jumping position.
- ☐ Ride a ground pole course at the trot with opening and closing circles, good approaches.

LEVEL SEVEN - TEAL

Completed: _____

- ☐ Discuss basic dressage theory, showing knowledge of the training pyramid and use of natural aids.
- ☐ Discuss appropriate use of artificial aids and training devices.
- ☐ Demonstrate a self-directed, progressive warm-up for flatwork and jumping, with consideration of mount's strengths and weaknesses.
- ☐ Ride various ring figures on the aids, at walk, trot and canter, demonstrating rhythm, relaxation, connection and bend.
- ☐ Ride accurate, balanced transitions, including halts and transitions between the walk and canter.
- ☐ Demonstrate the following maneuvers:
 - ☐ *Turn on the haunches*
 - ☐ *Leg yield*
 - ☐ *Shoulder-in*
 - ☐ *Haunches-in*
 - ☐ *Countercanter*
- ☐ Ride a simple change of lead through the walk or a flying change of lead, appropriate to the horse.
- ☐ Demonstrate lengthening and shortening stride.
- ☐ Ride and evaluate an unfamiliar horse, to include work at all three gaits and through basic ring figures.
- ☐ Demonstrate proficiency in gymnastic jumping:
 - ☐ *Designing and setting up a variety of gymnastic exercises.*
 - ☐ *Riding with confidence and balance over progressive gymnastics up to 3'6".*
 - ☐ *Demonstrating a secure position over fences up to 3' with and without stirrups and/or reins.*
- ☐ Jump a stadium course at 3', demonstrating an understanding of hunter, equitation and show jumping questions and approaches to riding them.
- ☐ Jump a course (8-10 fences) at 2'6" without stirrups.
- ☐ Ride in a galloping position over varying terrain, demonstrating knowledge of pace in meters per minute.
- ☐ Jump a variety of Novice level cross-country obstacles, to include:
 - ☐ *Up and down banks*
 - ☐ *Ditches*
 - ☐ *Related obstacles (including water complex)*
 - ☐ *Jumps on a slope*

LEVEL FOUR - BLUE

Completed: _____

- ☐ Know and demonstrate a minimum of four exercises that can be used to improve the seat.
- ☐ Ride ring figures at the walk and trot, with correct diagonals.
- ☐ Demonstrate knowledge of aids used for asking horse to correctly bend.
- ☐ Ride accurate trot/canter transitions.
- ☐ Ride a 20m circle at the walk, trot, and canter, with correct diagonals and leads.
- ☐ Ride USDF Introductory Test C with accurate transitions and ring figures.
- ☐ Ride at the walk, trot and canter without stirrups.
- ☐ Ride simple gymnastic grids up to 2', to include one small oxer.
- ☐ Trot into a related distance and canter out.
- ☐ Ride a ground pole course at the canter, with simple changes of lead as necessary.
- ☐ Jump a course of 5-7 fences at 18", at the trot, with good approaches, developing the ability to plan a course.
- ☐ Demonstrate an effective use of disengagement and pulley rein by stopping horse from canter.
- ☐ Ride in the open, up and down hills and over fences and natural obstacles at the walk and trot.

LEVEL FIVE - ORANGE

Completed: _____

- ☐ Demonstrate self-directed, progressive warm-up for flatwork and jumping.
- ☐ Maintain light contact on the flat, demonstrating long and loose rein when asked.
- ☐ Demonstrate the following maneuvers:
 - ☐ *Turn on the forehand*
 - ☐ *Sitting trot*
 - ☐ *Figure-8 at canter*
 - ☐ *Serpentine at canter*
- ☐ Demonstrate ring figures at all three gaits, with awareness of bend and balance.
- ☐ Ride ring figures at the walk, trot and canter without stirrups.
- ☐ Be able to drop and pick up stirrups at all gaits without looking down.
- ☐ Ride small bounce grid, with and without reins and/or stirrups.
- ☐ Ride simple gymnastic grids up to 2'6", including low fences without reins.
- ☐ Jump a course (minimum 6 fences) at 2', at the canter, with smooth turns, good approaches and correct leads.
- ☐ Ride in the open in a group, at walk, trot and canter, maintaining control.
- ☐ Demonstrate a galloping position at the walk, trot, and canter.
- ☐ Jump simple cross-country obstacles, up to 2'3" at the trot and canter.
- ☐ Ride the hand gallop.

LEVEL SIX - PURPLE

Completed: _____

- ☐ Ride on the longe line at walk, trot and canter, without stirrups/reins, performing balancing and suppling exercises.
- ☐ Identify diagonals and leads through feel.
- ☐ Demonstrate the following maneuvers:
 - ☐ 20m, 15m and 10m circles at walk and trot
 - ☐ 20m, 15m and 10m half-circles at walk and trot
 - ☐ Simple change of lead on a straight line
 - ☐ Leg yield, from quarter line to rail, at walk and trot
- ☐ Ride accurate trot/halt/trot transitions.
- ☐ Demonstrate a walk to canter transition, returning to walk with three or fewer steps of trot.
- ☐ Ride canter to halt in three or fewer steps.
- ☐ Ride USEA Novice Test A or B, demonstrating accuracy, forward rhythm, steady contact, correct bend on circles and through corners.
- ☐ Know distances for trot poles and basic gymnastic exercises.
- ☐ Ride a variety of gymnastic exercises up to 2'9", with and without stirrups and/or reins.
- ☐ Jump a course (minimum of 8 fences) at 2'6", to include spread and vertical fences, related distances, bending lines, and a combination.
- ☐ Jump a small course (5 to 6 fences) at 2' without stirrups.
- ☐ Maintain a galloping position at the walk, trot and canter, for a minimum of five minutes.
- ☐ Ride at the gallop in the open with control and a strong galloping position.
- ☐ Jump a variety of Beginner Novice level cross-country fences, to include bank, ditch, trot or canter through water.

LEVEL THREE - GREEN

Completed: _____

- ☐ Demonstrate ability to safely catch horse in both stall and field.
- ☐ Prepare for a lesson independently in fifteen minutes or less.
- ☐ Discuss procedure for warm up, cool down; with consideration of weather, footing, fitness level of horse.
- ☐ Demonstrate the following maneuvers:
 - ☐ Reinback
 - ☐ Rating speed at walk and trot
 - ☐ Large circle at canter
 - ☐ Change of direction with simple change at canter
- ☐ Ride at the canter on the rail in both directions, demonstrating both light and full seat.
- ☐ Demonstrate awareness of leads.
- ☐ Ride at the trot for a minimum of five minutes without stirrups, alternating posting and sitting.
- ☐ Drop stirrups and pick up again, without looking down, at the trot.
- ☐ Ride in 2-point at the canter, on the flat and over a single ground pole.
- ☐ Trot over a grid of trot poles with reins knotted and arms outstretched.
- ☐ Ride ground pole course at the trot with smooth turns, good approaches, correct diagonals.
- ☐ Jump a single crossrail, not to exceed 18".
- ☐ Ride bareback confidently at the walk and trot, balancing independently of hands.

HorseSense Learning Levels

LEARNING LEVELS PROGRESSION BOOKLETS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ASSEMBLING BOOKLETS

1. Print booklet pages front-and-back:
 - a. Print page 1.
 - b. Print page 2 on the back of page 1.
 - c. Print page 3.
 - d. Print page 4 on the back of page 3.
2. Stack both sheets together, then fold them in half, carefully aligning edges, to form booklet.
3. Place 2-3 staples along folded edge of booklet, about 1/8" from edge.



We keep the "official" copy of each booklet, with the checkmarks and completion signatures, in our office. If a student wants a copy of their booklet, we'll provide one – but find that most kids lose them pretty much immediately!

