

EXPLANATION OF THE DIFFERENT LEVELS

If new to this sport please read these explanations to ensure you enter the right level for you and or your horse's experience.

INTRODUCTORY

- This level is designed to help riders to prepare for Preparatory level, allowing them to be independent but still able to have the help if needed. This level is ridden at walk and trot only. There is no speed phase for this level.
- At this level the rider is allowed to be assisted on course by an Adult, who is allowed in the ring and may communicate verbally with the rider.
- The Assistant should not lead the horse unless the situation becomes unsafe.
- If the combination for whatever reason needs the Assistant to lead the horse the rider cannot receive higher than a 5 for that obstacle.
- Introductory horses/ponies may be ridden in a higher level with another rider.
- All Introductory riders must wear an approved helmet.
- The horse must be at least three years of age.

PREPARATORY

- This level is designed to test the horse and rider combination's competence at performing basic dressage figures and simple obstacles.
- While the horse is not yet required to be on the bit, maintaining a steady contact and regular rhythm must be shown.
- In the Dressage phase Medium Walk and Working Trot are required.
- In the Ease of Handling phase obstacles are performed at Walk and Trot. Canter is considered a break in gait and will be penalised.
- Two hands must be used predominantly on the reins during the Dressage and Ease of Handling phases, and trot may be performed sitting or rising.
- In the Speed phase obstacles are performed at walk or trot only. More than 3 canter strides will incur a penalty of plus 20 seconds at each occurrence. At 3 occurrences the combination will be disqualified.
- The horse must be at least three years of age.

PRELIMINARY

- This phase tests a competitor's ability to demonstrate correct basics and geometry. The horse should be showing some roundness and acceptance of the bit and aids.
- In the Dressage phase Working Canter is introduced. Also Walk on long diagonals; Trot and Canter circles at E and B; 2-loop Serpentine at Trot; Leg-yield at Walk; Reinback. Transitions are done between markers.

- In the Ease of Handling and Speed phases obstacles are performed at trot, with canter between each obstacle.
- In Speed, if the horse canters within an a single obstacle more than three strides or more the penalty is +20 secs. At 3 occurrences the combination will be disqualified. Exceptions are the Jump and the Bank, which may be cantered or trotted.
- Lead changes in EOH are canter/trot/canter. Transitions in and out of obstacles may be progressive through trot and walk.
- Ridden predominantly with two hands. The horse must be at least four years of age

NOVICE

- This level introduces lateral work and has an expectation of greater precision with horizontal balance of the horse.
- In the Dressage Phase: Extended Walk; ½ 20m Trot Circles; Canter-walk-canter transitions; Leg Yield at trot; 15m Canter circles; Trot and Canter circles at X; Lengthened Trot. Transitions are made at markers and are close together.
- In the Ease of Handling phase Canter is required both between the obstacles and in the obstacles except for the Slaloms, which are trotted. Lead changes may be canter/trot/canter or canter/walk/canter.
- Transitions into & out of obstacles may be progressive.
- Transitions must be completed before transitions markers – that is, before the horse's nose on entry or the hinqarters on exit have passed the marker.
- Ridden predominantly with two hands. The horse must be at least four years of age.

ELEMENTARY

- The Elementary level is designed to prepare competitors to compete at the upper levels. Some engagement is expected (tilting of the pelvis, bringing hind legs closer to the center of balance). The horse should be through (not leaning on the bit, with steady head carriage just in front of the vertical).
- In the Dressage phase: Shoulder-In; Quarters-In; Stretchy Circle; ½ Turn On The Haunches; Shortened Walk and Trot; Counter-Canter.
- Lead changes in both the Dressage and Ease of Handling phases are simple changes (canter-walk-canter).
- Ridden predominantly with two hands, however riders may choose to execute an obstacle one-handed in preparation for higher levels. The horse must be at least 5 years of age.

There are a further three levels after this that are not yet applicable in NZ!