

QUALIFYING SCORES

AHSA REGIONAL FINALS (Held in September)

First Level - Adult (65%), Junior/Young Rider (63%)
Second Level - Adult (65%), Junior/Young Rider (60%)
Third Level - Adult (60%), Junior/Young Rider (58%)
Fourth Level - Adult (60%), Junior/Young Rider (58%)
Fourth, Intermediate I, Grand Prix Freestyle - (65%)
Prix St. Georges - (60%) Intermediate I (60%)
Intermediate II - (58%) Grand Prix - (58%)

CDS ANNUAL SHOW (Held in September w/AHSA Finals)

First Level - 5 scores 64% - 4 different judges
Second Level - 5 scores 62% - 4 different judges
Third Level - 5 scores 60% - 4 different judges
Fourth Level - 5 scores 58% - 4 different judges
Prix St. George - 3 scores 58% - 2 different judges
Intermediate I - 3 scores 56% - 2 different judges
Intermediate II - 3 scores 56% - 2 different judges
Grand Prix - 3 scores 56% - 2 different judges

CDS JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS (Held in August)

Training Level - 3 scores 60% - 2 different judges
First Level - 3 scores 60% - 2 different judges
Second Level - 3 scores 55% - 2 different judges
Third Level - 3 scores 55% - 2 different judges
Fourth Level - 3 scores 55% - 2 different judges
FEI Young Riders - 3 scores 55% - 2 different judges

L.A. CHAPTER, CDS YEAR END AWARDS (at Annual Dinner)

To count for points, all scores must be over 55% for Adults and Juniors over 15 years, and over 50% for Juniors 15 and under. Only Open, Adult Amateur and Jr/Yr classes in L.A. Chapter Approved Shows will count.



SHOW TIME

A GUIDE AND CHECKLIST FOR DRESSAGE COMPETITORS

Compliments of
Van Dahn, International

This booklet is designed for riders who are new to competition as well as for veteran competitors. We hope these guidelines and checklists will give you the necessary information to help you compete with confidence. Good luck and have fun!

A Bit About Dressage

The word "dressage" comes from the French verb "dresser" -- to train. Thus, dressage is basic schooling of the horse. Through the use of internationally accepted principles--a systematic series of levels--the horse is trained in a regular, logical progression from easier to harder movements. Each level requires more balance, strength, suppleness and submission through progressively difficult movements.

TRAINING LEVEL introduces the horse and rider to the basic principles of dressage competition and establishes the correct foundation for the training of the horse. The green horse is required to move in a free, rhythmic, forward manner, relaxed and obedient, stretching into the bit in a calm receptive manner. The required movements are working gaits, gradual transitions, and 20 meter circles.

FIRST LEVEL requires that the horse moves freely forward in a relaxed, rhythmic manner with its spine always parallel to the track of the prescribed movement, accepting the bit. The horse must have a soft response to the aids--softening of lower jaw, some flexion at the poll, lateral bending, and quiet transitions. New movements are 10 & 15 meter circles, lengthening of the stride, serpentine, leg-yielding, and counter canter.

SECOND LEVEL requires, in addition to First Level qualities, a degree of suppleness, balance, and impulsion as well as accuracy. The rider must be able to put the horse on the bit and keep him there without fight or evasion and without shortening the strides. The new movements are medium gaits, start of collection, shoulder-in, travers, reinback, walk-canter transitions, counter canter, haunches-in, half turn on the haunches at the walk, and 8 meter circles.

THIRD LEVEL requires more impulsion and use of haunches, relaxation of the back and poll enabling the rider to collect and extend the horse's gaits while remaining reliably on the bit. The new movements are walk pirouette, half-pass at trot and canter, flying changes of lead at canter, extended gaits, and improvement of collection.

FOURTH LEVEL requires a high degree of suppleness, impulsion, balance and lightness while always remaining reliably on the bit; its movements are straight, energetic and cadenced, and the transitions are precise and smooth. The new movements are serpentine at canter with flying change, canter half-pirouette, flying changes in series, counter change of hand in half-pass at trot, and flying changes every fourth stride.

FEI LEVELS (Fifth Level, Prix St. Georges, Intermediate I, Intermediate II, and Grand Prix) demonstrate the horse's submission to all the demands of the execution of classical equitation and a standard of physical and mental balance and development which enable him to carry them out with harmony, lightness and ease. Advanced movements include 6 meter voltes, piaffe, passage, full pirouette, and flying changes every stride.

Dressage Competitions

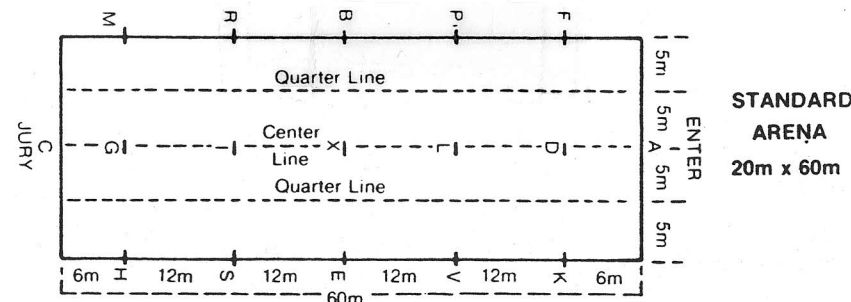
During training and schooling, the movements of a particular level are not practiced in any special order or pattern, but are used as necessary for the individual horse. In competition, a standard set of tests is used so that every competitor rides the same pattern of movements. Riders obtain copies of the tests ahead of time for study, and, in some cases, are required to ride the pattern from memory, although usually a reader is allowed to call the movements if the rider wishes.

Scoring takes place for each of the individual movements in a test, and can range from "10" for excellent to "0" for not executed. The judge (Ground Jury) scores each movement as it is performed and adds comments. Scores for each movement are added to the collective marks--an overall evaluation of the gaits, impusions and submission of the horse as well as the rider's position, seat and use of aids. The total earned is divided by the total possible points, resulting in a percentage score. The score sheet is then given to the rider.

10 Excellent	7 Fairly Good	4 Insufficient
9 Very Good	6 Satisfactory	3 Fairly Bad
8 Good	5 Sufficient	2 Bad
1 Very Bad	0 Not Performed or Fall of Horse or Rider	

In addition to the 1-10 scores, you can incur penalties for "error of the course" (making a wrong turn, omitting a movement) or "error of the test" (trot rising instead of sitting, at salute does not take reins in one hand, etc.). If the judge rings you off-course, penalties are recorded as follows: first error, 2 points; second error, 4 points; third error, 8 points; fourth error, elimination--though you are allowed to finish the test.

The tests are performed in a dressage arena with letters placed at specific distances around the outside of the arena--they are the points of reference for beginning or ending any particular movement. The standard size arena (20 x 60 meters) is always used for First Level and above, while a small size arena (20 x 40 meters) may be used for Training Level, First Level, Test 2 and Second Level, Test 2.



Choosing the Show

Local schooling shows are a good place to start--they are usually low-key and fun, a place to make mistakes and gain experience. When you feel comfortable with all the various aspects of showing, you can move up to recognized shows--a show governed by specific organizations such as the American Horse Shows Association (AHSA) or California Dressage Society (CDS). Generally, the level of competition at recognized shows is much higher because members are earning points for year-end awards.

Choosing Your Tests

Your instructor or trainer can give you the best advice on which tests to ride. Remember, the purpose of showing is to get an objective opinion of the progress of your training from the judge--show at the appropriate level of your horse's training and your level of skill. (Judges usually frown upon the practice of novice riders on advanced horses competing at the lower levels.) Once you establish the proper level, choose the tests that best reflects your horse's strong areas. The only ASHA rule that restricts your test selection is that you cannot ride in more than two consecutive levels on the same horse (see Article 1919 in the AHSA Rule Book).

A general practice is to enter two classes. The first one should be at a level both you and your horse are absolutely secure and capable of performing without difficulty. It will build your confidence and give your horse a chance to adjust to the new environment. Your second class should be at the level you are currently working on at home. This will give you an objective appraisal of your work as well as some helpful suggestions from the judge on the score sheet.

Remember that you should not over-work your horse at shows by entering too many classes. In a one-day show, limit yourself to 2 or 3 classes per horse, even in the lower levels. In a two-day show, 2 classes each day should be enough. At FEI levels, no more than 2 classes on the same day and a maximum of 3 FEI rides at a two-day show.

Memorizing Your Tests

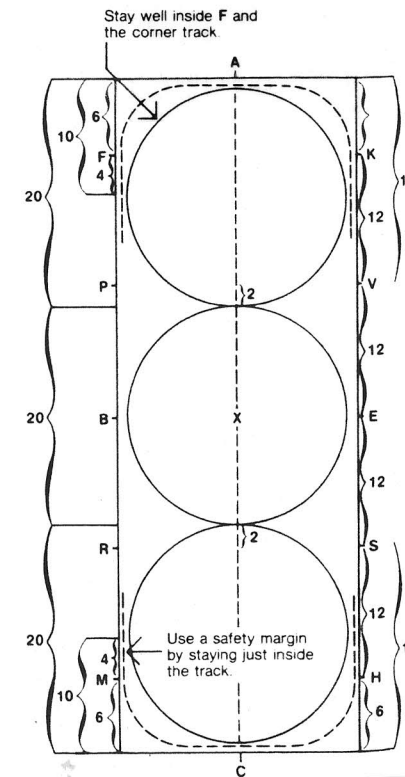
There are many different ways to memorize your test(s), and you will eventually use what works best for you. Meanwhile, here is a sure-fire system:

DON'T memorize the test on your horse! You can practice the individual movements, but if you put them together in the correct sequence too often, your horse will learn the test and anticipate the movements.

Memorize the exact words, including the letters, of the each test movement from the actual test (e.g., A enter working trot sitting, X halt, salute). Sloppy memorization produces sloppy tests so don't learn the test like this: I go down the center and stop at X, then I trot on and turn that way, then circle there, then canter in that corner, etc.

Recite the test out loud from memory until you no longer pause to think about what comes next.

Memorize the location of the dressage letters.



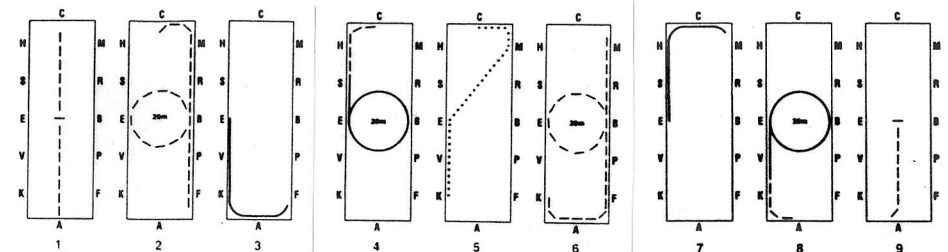
Learn your geometry. Study the diagram (left) to see, for example, exactly where 20 meter circles are ridden in a standard 60m x 20m arena. If you are riding at training level, you might be asked to ride in a 40m x 20m arena, so be prepared and learn your figures for that arena size, too.

Draw (and xerox lots of copies) of some blank dressage arenas and diagram each test movement (see the example below). Use colored pencils for each gait, or dotted, straight and dashed lines--any system that helps you visualize the test on paper.

Get out in the arena and walk the test. Make mental notes -- for example, where you will turn off the center line, where the four points of your circles will be, where you will ask for the transitions, etc.

Practice each movement on your horse, but not in sequence.

Remember, you are the one responsible for any error while riding your test--even if you have a reader and even if the reader gives incorrect directions. Don't take any chances--memorize your test!



--- = trot

_____ = canter

.... = walk

The Entry Form

Read the prize list carefully for special conditions and/or requirements.

Complete all items on the entry form legibly. Include all AHSA, USDF, CDS or other required membership numbers, OR enclose the non-member fees for rider, owner, leasee, agent, and trainer where applicable. Every owner, agent, and trainer must sign the entry blank. Local management may require the rider to sign.

A trainer is "that adult person physically on the show grounds who is responsible for the health and welfare of the horse."

A parent or guardian must sign for a rider who has not reached his/her 18th birthday. If the parent or guardian is not the owner or trainer, then he/she need not be an AHSA member or pay the non-member fee.

Clearly state on the entry form, or attach a note listing any special requirements (i.e., late arrival, extra bedding, stallion stabling, must leave early, etc.)

Double check your class numbers on the entry form, and enclose the correct fees.

SEND THE ENTRY FORM IN ON TIME!

Be Prepared!

REGULATIONS - Become familiar with any special state, county, or local laws and regulations regarding special immunizations, veterinary certification, travel, or quarantine requirements.

AHSA RULES - Know the rules of the game--read the "Dressage" section of the current AHSA Rulebook and the rules in the show prize list.

READERS - Arrange for a reader if you need one. The timing of test instructions and the manner of reading them is very important and should be practiced well before the show. Tell your reader how you like the test read. Be sure his/her inflection cannot be mistaken as coaching. The tests may only be read in English, unless prior permission is granted from the Show Management and Judges.

TRAILERING - Arrange and confirm trailering/shipping for your horse ahead of time. Make sure your horse loads without a fuss--practice loading before the actual trailering day.

LISTS - Bring all of your personal equipment with you. Don't plan on borrowing items from other competitors. Prepare an equipment list! Use our checklist as a guide and add whatever else you may need.

RIDE TIMES - When you receive your ride times, check for time conflicts and notify the show secretary immediately if there are problems.

GROOMING - Clip your horse if necessary. Trim whiskers, fetlocks, ears and hooves. Pull mane and tail. Bathe the whole horse.

SHOES - Make sure your horse is properly shod. The show farrier is for emergencies.

TACK - Make sure your tack is in good repair. Clean, condition and polish tack. To avoid stains on breeches, only oil the undersides of saddle during show season.

DISTRACTIONS - If possible, leave your children and dogs at home.

What to Wear

Rider: A black hunt coat with white sleeved shirt and white stock tie; white (or light colored) breeches; and black boots.

Black hunt cap, derby, or top hat (according to the level you are riding). If you have long hair, put it in a net.

Gloves (white) add to a neat appearance, but are optional.

Spurs and a whip not longer than 48", including lash, are allowed, but not required.

A formal coat with tails is appropriate only at the F.E.I. levels (above fourth level). It is always worn with white breeches and a top hat. Spurs are mandatory at F.E.I. levels, and whips are not allowed.

All your show clothes should be clean, brushed, pressed, and sparkling! Polish your boots, spur straps and spurs.

Horse: English saddle with stirrups--preferably a dressage saddle.

Saddle pad, if used, should fit the saddle and can be square-cornered or fitted.

A bridle, made entirely of leather, with a flash, dropped, figure-eight noseband, or plain cavesson. The bit must be one shown in Figure 7 of the AHSA Rule Book (snaffle for Training - Fourth Level; a double bridle is optional at Fourth and mandatory for FEI).

Braiding the mane is optional, but traditional and expected. A good, braiding job gives a neat appearance and emphasizes the horse's neck. Often the hair on each side of the dock is trimmed to emphasize tail carriage.

A neat appearance is essential. If you look good, you'll feel good. That pride translates to your ride.

Checking in and Setting Up

All communication with management must be conducted in a polite and concise manner.

CHECK IN with stable manager and the show secretary.

Park in designated areas and keep the fire lanes clear. Keep the stalls you are assigned--or work out alternatives with the stable manager.

When you first check in with the show secretary, verify your ride, ring(s), and time(s). There may have been a change from or an error on the post card you received.

SCHEDULE CHANGES need to be reported to management. No-shows and rider substitutions need to be officially processed. This is an AHSA requirement.

WITHDRAWING - You must respect management's stated procedures for starting time and schedules. Inform management as soon as possible if you find it necessary to withdraw your horse from competition.

UNPACKING

- keep aisles clear for other traffic. If you did bring your dog, keep it on a leash at all times and tie it on a **SHORT** shank when in the aisle.

STALL CARD - Enter emergency phone numbers and where you are staying on a stall card.

GENERAL RULES

Wash horses according to management's rules; dump manure only at designated areas.

When braiding, cross-tie only in stalls--not in the aisle.

If you are trailer stabling, either spread manure according to management's plan or remove it to the designed area.

No smoking in the barn -- **EVER**.

Check with the stable manager prior to using electrical appliances -- radios are not for everyone -- keep the volume down -- **PLEASE!**

Introduce yourself to those in neighboring stalls. Look the area over.

LOCATE RINGS (by number), water, muck heap, etc.

VOLUNTEER - once settled in, check with show management to see if they could use any volunteer help. But be sure that your horse is both secure and comfortable.

LISTEN - you (and your groom) should keep an ear to the PA system. Some of the announcements may apply to you.

CHECK the official bulletin board twice each day.

ALCOHOL & DRUGS - alcohol and the pernicious use of drugs have no place around horses. This applies to both people and horses. Horses may be tested, unannounced, at any time by an especially appointed veterinarian. If you horse is picked for drug testing, be polite and helpful to the veterinarians. They will work around your ride schedule and warm-up times.

What is not permitted? Any drug which stimulates, depresses, anesthetizes or masks said drugs is illegal. (Read "Rule IV - Drugs and Medications" in the AHSA Rule Book).

There is an exception to this rule. Your horse may be given a drug which is illegal for show purposes if the drug is given for a **MEDICAL** purpose. However, in this instance, the horse must be withdrawn from competition for 24 hours and a special "AHSA Medication Report Form" must be submitted immediately (available from the show technical delegate).

In the Warm-Up Area

Check in with the ring steward when going into the official warm-up area.

Longe in designated areas only and give all horses enough room. Take your longeing equipment with you when you leave. Adjust your tack in a corner or in the center of the warm-up area--preferably outside.

Pedestrian traffic in warm-up areas is not appropriate. In case of an accident or runaway horse--halt and stand still. Kicking horses should be identified with a red tail ribbon.

When entering, be careful you do not cut someone off. Pass left shoulder to left shoulder and look where you are going. Slower gaits take the inside track. Halt or slow down in the center of the ring. Horses doing lateral work have right of way. If someone asks for the rail, give it to them. Keep at least one horse length away from other horses.

Warm-up is for competitors preparing for an upcoming test--others should give them priority. Trainers should be courteous to other riders trying to concentrate on their own warm-up (no need to shout). Be polite. Bad language is **NEVER** tolerable.

Check to see if there is a management policy covering schooling procedures and performance arena use. Check Article 1921 of the AHSA Rule book for equipment restrictions in warm-up areas--don't risk elimination!

Upper level riders should try not to frighten green horses (and riders). Prior to performance, last minute adjustments should be made outside the warm-up area.

Before Your Test

Wipe horse's eyes, nose and ears. Pick out feet and dress hooves with oil. Spot clean any needy areas on the horse's body. A towel gives a nice shine. Brush the tail well. ShowSheen adds shine and keeps the tail from tangling. Check braids to make sure they are still tight and clean. Dust your boots and your horse just before entering the competition arena.

It is your responsibility to present yourself at the gate a little before your scheduled time. Enter promptly with permission of the gate steward. In the event of a scratch, you do not have to ride ahead of your time. If you do, any schedule variation should be brought to the attention of the judge's scribe.

Make sure your competition number is visible at all times to the steward and the judge.

Be prepared for a tack check by either the ring steward or the Technical Delegate.

Know your test. If you use a reader, instruct him/her to read each movement only once and not to speak to you in any other circumstance. Repeating the instructions may disqualify you! Talking to you constitutes coaching and disqualification. If you go off course, it is the judge's responsibility to whistle or ring you off-course and direct you back to the correct movement.

During Your Test

If you cluck, cheep, click, whistle or make any other type of noise to your horse, the judge is obligated to mark down each movement the noise occurs in, and with increasing severity. So keep your mouth shut and be quiet while you are riding your test!

If you enter ahead of your time, you are saying you are ready to be judged--it is not appropriate to expect additional warm-up time around the perimeter of the performance arena either during a class or in a scheduled break.

Social conversations with the judge while circling the arena prior to performance is frowned upon. However, the scribe does need a chance to identify your bridle number.

After the signal from the judge, enter at "A" within 90 seconds. (Be sure you have removed all bandages and boots from the horse!)

If you go off course, get direction from the judge, NOT from the reader.

You can pick up your test after the class is finished and the placings are posted. Check the scoring and make any corrections right away. Study the comments, and don't forget your ribbon!

After the Show

Either the show committee or the technical delegate may arrange a time for you to meet with a judge. Awards ceremonies organized by management need to be attended to maintain sponsorship participation.

Pick up all tests and awards and return your bridle number.

Be sure to thank the competition management and their volunteer help.

Leave your stabling area clean and neat.

Send a thank you note if someone has been particularly helpful.

If you win, send a thank you note to the trophy donor.

Some Show Costs

Hauling	Varies. Other competitors going to the show may haul for gas or half of gas. Commercial haulers may charge \$1.00 per mile. Training barns may charge \$.75 per mile. Check before you go.
Grooming	Average \$10-\$20. Check with the groom to see what is included for the price.
Braiding	Average \$10-\$20. Usually the mane is done once and this lasts. Any touch-ups usually are free. Extra is charged for macrame and fancy things such as pomp-poms.
Schooling	Some instructors charge a fee; some prefer to have expenses paid for in return for schooling.
Entry Fees	\$15-\$50 per class; can be higher at F.E.I. Levels. You must also pay drug fees and sometimes association non-member and organization fees.
Stall Fees	About \$15 a day at schooling shows and \$45-\$85 at regular shows. This can be more if the show must have portable stalls put in just for the show. Sometimes you will be charged a ground fee of \$5-\$10 per day for working out of your trailer. Most show offices will take orders for feed and shavings that will be delivered to your stalls.
Lodging	RV parking is the most economical, usually between \$5-15 per night. Hotel/motel rates vary with the location, season, and any show discounts that Show Management arrange. Advance reservations are wise.
Food	Show ground food is required at all AHSA shows. Price and quality vary greatly.

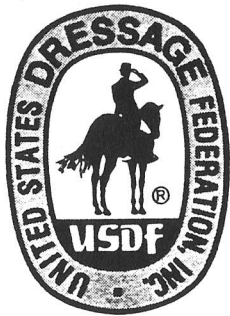
Organizations



AMERICAN HORSE SHOWS ASSOCIATION, INC

The governing body for all national horse show activity and a member of the Federation Equestre International (regulates all international competitions, provides FEI tests) and the U.S. Olympic Committee

220 East 42nd Street
New York, NY 10017-5806



UNITED STATES DRESSAGE FEDERATION, INC.

A national organization with its own system of awards. It coordinates dressage organizations on a national level.

P.O. Box 80668
Lincoln, NE 68501



CALIFORNIA DRESSAGE SOCIETY

A state-wide organization, CDS is one of the largest dressage organizations in the nation, with more than 2,500 members in its 30 chapters. It has its own awards program and Annual Championship Show, usually held in conjunction with the AHSA Western Regional Championships.

P.O. Box 417
Carmel Valley, CA 93924

Recommended Reading

AHSA	AHSA Rule Book
J. Burton	How to Ride a Winning Dressage Test
Max Gahwyler	The Competitive Edge: Improving Your Dressage Scores in the Lower Levels (1991 Tests)
Kate Hamilton	Dressage: An Approach to Competition
Susan Harris	Grooming to Win
Leonie Marshall	A Glossary of Judge's Dressage Terms
Charles de Knuffy	Dressage Questions Answered
Charles de Knuffy	Creative Horsemanship
French Blake	Dressage for Beginners
??	The Illustrated Book of Dressage
Eric Herberman	The Dressage Formula
Bengt Ljungquist	Practical Dressage Manual
Wilhelm Museler	Riding Logic
Alois Podajsky	Complete Training of Horse and Rider in the Principles of Classical Horsemanship

Videos

Hilda Gurney	ABC's of Basic Dressage
Horse in Sport	Dressage
David Hunt	Basic Dressage
Sandy Pflueger-Clarke	The Strategy of Dressage
Bill Woods	USDF Introduction to Dressage

HORSESHOW CHECKLIST

Tack Trunk

- Show saddle, pad, girth, stirrups, leathers
- Extra leathers, stirrups, girth, pad and reins
- Show bridle, bit and reins
- Dressage whips (48" maximum for showing)
- Extra halter and lead rope
- Lunge line, lunge whip and lunging cavesson
- Plenty of brushes
- Hoof picks and hoof dressing
- Sponges and wiping rags
- Fly spray mixed in a spray bottle
- Towels and rags, saddle cleanser
- Day sheet and cooler or wool or waterproof blanket
- Leg wraps and cottons
- First Aid kit for horse (and people)
- Braiding kit (yarn, comb, scissors)
- Hammer, screwdriver and snaps for stall

For the Horse

- Water bucket and feed tubs or hay net
- Salt block
- Hay, grain, bran and supplements
- Electrolytes (for hot weather)
- Stall guard

For the Rider

- Show jacket, hat and gloves
- Show blouse or polo shirt, stock tie and pin
- Show breeches, belt and boots
- Boot pulls, boot jack and spurs, spur straps
- Raincoat and hat cover, rubber boots
- Hair net and hair pins, rubber bands and clips
- Lab coat or wrap-around skirt to cover dirty breeches
- Sunscreen and insect repellent
- Water or something to drink

Other Useful Items

- Rake, pitchfork, broom and shovel
- Lawn chairs and umbrellas
- Any award forms for Show Secretary to sign
- Hooks for hanging coat and bridles
- Radio (quietly, please)

Before You Leave

- Check your trailer floor and mats
- Check trailer tires for wear and air pressure
- Check trailer lights, signals, hitch and brakes
- Check tow vehicle lights, signals, brakes and hitch
- Check all fluid levels in tow vehicle
- Check tow vehicle tires for wear and air pressure
- Make sure you have the proper maps and directions