

2026 USEF Rule EQ113 Equitation Tests From Which Judges Must Choose (New for 2026 highlighted in red. Effective Dec 1, 2025)

Tests may be performed either collectively or individually but no other tests may be used. Instructions must be publicly announced.

NOTE: In Hunter/Jumping Seat Equitation classes, any exhibitor who does not participate in the testing is placed last of those competitors called back to test. Should more than one exhibitor fail to return for testing they will be placed at the judge's discretion. If exhibitors are called back collectively to test, they must remain in the ring until all exhibitors have completed the test. If riders are asked to be in the ring during the testing, riders must be able to watch the other competitors test. Equitation tests must not have exhibitors trotting or cantering through in gate or out gate; any exhibitor choosing to trot or canter through the in-gate or out-gate must be eliminated (see EQ108).

Obstacles jumped in an equitation test must have been included in the original course. Jumps must be jumped in the original direction unless otherwise specified.

1. Work collectively or individually at a walk, rising/posting trot, sitting trot, and/or canter, **and/or demonstrate a two-point or half seat position at the walk or trot.**

2. Downward Transition Test:

- a) Walk (4-5 steps)
- b) Halt (4-6 seconds)
- c) Halt and Back for (3-5 steps).

When riders working collectively are asked to halt and then back, they should walk forward a few steps and halt again after backing and then proceed with any further instructions from the judge.

3. Question(s) regarding basic horsemanship, tack or equipment and/or conformation. The judge may ask question(s) that are appropriate for the level of expected skill of any given class or specifications.

4. Working either collectively, or individually, riders may demonstrate the lengthening or collection of strides on the flat at the walk, sitting or posting/rising trot and/or canter.

5. Figure Eight at the trot, demonstrating change of diagonals. In any Figure Eight movement, the rider should start at a center point at the halt. To finish the movement the rider is to return to the halt at same position as the point of commencement.

6. Figure Eight at the canter on the correct lead. In this movement, the rider will begin at the halt and demonstrate a simple change of lead. This is a change whereby the horse is brought back into the walk or trot (either is acceptable unless the judges specify) and then restarted into a canter on the opposite lead in the center of the figure, then will proceed to the second circle on the opposite lead. The rider will halt in the center at the same point of commencement to finish the figure.

7. Jump a shortened course. The riders must jump all obstacles in the same direction of the original course unless the judge clearly states that a jump be attempted in the opposite direction of the original course. If the judge requests that a jump be used in the opposite direction it must be a vertical and if there are ground lines, they must be correct. (See EQ 102.11).

8. Jump low obstacles at a trot as well as a canter. The maximum height of trot jump is determined as 6" lower than class requirements and is not to exceed 3' for horses and 2' for ponies. Oxers may be

used as a trot jump in classes listed at 3'6" or higher.

9. Demonstrate a half- turn or a half-turn in the reverse. In all cases where a figure is requested between two jumps that requires a change of direction, the rider will not be charged for crossing their path nor will this count as a refusal between the obstacles.

10. Change leads on a line demonstrating simple or flying changes. The simple change is whereby the horse is brought back into the walk or trot (either is acceptable unless the judges specify) and then restarted into a canter on the opposite lead. The flying change is performed in one stride with the front and hind legs changing at the same moment. The change of the leading front and hind leg takes place during the moment of suspension.

11. Figure Eight at the canter demonstrating flying changes of leads. Like all Figure Eight movements, the rider is to first halt at a center point. The flying change is performed in one stride with the front and hind legs changing at the same moment. The change of the leading front and hind leg takes place during the moment of suspension. The rider will halt in the center at the same point of commencement to finish the figure.

12. Collection of strides between two fences. It is recommended that a line chosen for this test be not less than 70'.

- a. For safety purposes, judges may only ask for additional strides to be added and must not ask the rider to leave out a stride.

13. Work collectively or individually at the walk, posting/rising trot, and/or sitting trot, and/or canter without irons. In any case where riders are asked to perform without irons they must be allowed to walk or halt and be afforded the opportunity to cross their irons if they wish.

14. Execute serpentine at a trot and/or canter on the correct leads. If trotting, the rider is to demonstrate the changes of diagonals at the center points of the figure, if cantering, the rider should demonstrate the simple or flying changes of lead in the center of the figure. The simple change whereby the horse is brought back into the walk or trot (either is acceptable unless the judges specify) and then restarted into a canter on the opposite lead.

15. Canter on the counter lead on the flat. For the purposes of Hunt Seat Equitation on the flat, a counter canter is defined as a balanced canter on the outside lead. If working collectively, no more than 12 riders may counter canter at one time. Riders must complete one full revolution around the arena in each direction.

16. A canter on the counter lead may be used on the approach to a jump. For the purposes of Hunt Seat Equitation over fences, the counter canter is designed to improve balance and suppleness.

When utilizing this test, rider may be asked to:

1. Approach a single jump on a counter lead. This test requires riders make at least ONE turn or bend of a course of not less than 90° on the counter lead.
2. Demonstrate a counter canter between 2 jumps on the course. For this test, the rider upon landing off the first jump can choose from the following acceptable options:
 - a) If the rider lands firstly on the inside lead, they may demonstrate a simple or flying change of lead before cantering through the first 90° turn and continue to hold the counter lead to the next jump. Either the simple or flying change is acceptable.
 - b) If the rider lands firstly on the outside lead, they may continue to hold the outside lead to the next required obstacle.

c) A judge can not require a rider to land on the counter lead.

17. Demonstrate a turn on the forehand done through the halt.

18. Demonstrate a turn on the haunches done from the walk.

19. Demonstrate Shoulder-in, Shoulder-out, Haunches-in, Haunches-out, Half pass or Leg Yield at either the walk or the sitting trot.

20. Hand Gallop. A hand gallop may be used either when riders are working collectively or individually on the flat (no more than 12 riders may hand gallop at one time) and it may also be used on the approach to a jump. The rider must be in a half-seat when executing the hand gallop. A hand gallop may not be requested into or out of a related distance line.

21. Ride without stirrups over fences. The riders must be allowed to remove the irons from the saddle or cross them if they wish.

22. Demonstration ride of approximately one minute. Riders must advise the judge(s) beforehand what ride they plan to demonstrate.

23. Change horses. (Note: this is the equivalent of two tests.) Riders will only change horses for Championship classes. Riders will not be asked to ride a different horse unless they have ridden the course on their own horse first.

a) When a swap of horses is requested, the rider must be given a minimum of 90 seconds to do a brief flat and jump no more than two schooling jumps.

b) Riders may be requested to jump a previous course or a portion of the previous course.

Tests 1 – 22 shall not be included even if included in the former course.