



The United States Pony Clubs, Inc. STANDARDS OF PROFICIENCY FOR H-B, H/H-A LEVELS

(Revised January 1, 2009)

The United States Pony Clubs, Inc., establishes Standards of Proficiency within the framework of the international Pony Club movement as the curriculum for a program of instruction and evaluation of its members for ratings.

D Rating: The D Ratings are an introduction to the fun and challenge of riding, establishing a foundation of safety habits and knowledge of the daily care of a pony and tack. The D-1 through D-3 Pony Club member learns to ride independently and with control, maintaining a reasonably secure position at the walk, trot and canter and over low fences. All D ratings are awarded at the club level.

C-1 and C-2 Ratings: The C-1 and C-2 is a Pony Club member learning to become an active horseman, to care independently for pony and tack and to understand the reasons for what he or she is doing. The C-1 and C-2 show development towards a secure, independent seat and increasing control and confidence in all phases of riding. The C-1 and C-2 ratings are awarded at the club level.

The H-B, C-3, B, H/H-A and A Ratings are facilitated on a national basis and require a greater depth of knowledge and proficiency than the earlier ratings. Successful candidates are competent, all-around horsemen, active and contributing members of USPC, who participate in a variety of Pony Club activities. They are also thoughtful leaders who set an example for all levels.

The H-B Rating covers Horse Management knowledge that demonstrates increasing knowledge and competence in the care and handling of horses.

The H/H-A Rating requires the knowledge, experience and maturity to evaluate and care for a mount's needs efficiently and in a variety of circumstances, and to teach riding and horse care to others.

Pony Club members may choose to follow one or all of three riding tracks. They are: Traditional, Show Jumping or Dressage.

The C-3 Rating reflects a basis of competence in riding and horse care that will make possible a lifetime of pleasure with horses. If the C-3 riding test is passed before the H-B, the member becomes a C+.

The B Rating is for the active horseman and Pony Club member who is interested in acquiring further knowledge and proficiency in riding. The B is able to ride experienced mounts with confidence and control. The B should be able to ride and care for another person's experienced mount, maintaining proper mental and physical condition without undoing any of the mount's education. The B understands and is able to explain the reasons for what he or she is doing and to contribute to the education of younger Pony Club members.

The A Rating, the highest rating, is divided into two parts: the H/H-A, which covers horse management, teaching and training and the A, which tests the riding phase. The A is able to ride mounts at various levels of schooling with judgement, tact and effectiveness; to train young mounts; and to retrain spoiled mounts. Like the B, the A understands and is able to explain the reasons for what he or she is doing and to contribute to the education of younger Pony Club members.

NOTE: In addition to its instructional programs, USPC offers a variety of activities at club, regional, inter-regional and national levels for team and individual participation. These activities include Eventing, Dressage, Foxhunting, Quiz, Mounted Games, Show Jumping, Tetrathlon, and Polocrosse. **Achieving a rating does not necessarily qualify the Pony Club member for competition in any horse sport.** Further study and preparation for a particular activity, including working as a team member, may be necessary.

Dimensions of Fences D to A* for Traditional Levels:

Rating	Height	Width at Top		Width at Base	
		CC	SJ	CC	SJ
D-2	18"	1'	1'	1'6"	1'6"
D-3	2'6"	2'6"	2'6"	4'3"	4'3"
C-1	2'9"	2'9"	2'9"	4'3"	4'3"
C-2	3'0"	3'3"	3'3"	4'7"	4'11"
C-3	3'3"	3'11"	3'9"	5'3"	5'7"
B	3'7"	4'7"	4'3"	6'7"	6'3"
A	3'9"	5'3"	4'9"	7'10"	6'11"

*Based on USPC Eventing Rules and US Equestrian Eventing Rules. When a second height is required at any one level, use appropriate dimensions shown on the chart above.

Dressage Specialty Levels:

C-3 = First Level**
B = Second Level**
A = Third Level**

Dimensions of Fences for Show Jumping Specialty Levels:

Rating	Height up to	Width at Top up to	Triple Bar up to
C-3	3'6"	3'9"	4'3"
B	3'9"	4'3"	4'6"
A	4'3"	4'9"	5'3"

C-3=Level II-III** B=Level III-IV** A=Level V-VI**

**See USEF Level Descriptions

THE H-B STANDARD

Horse Management Expectations

Candidates should be competent and must demonstrate sound judgment and maturity in the continuing care of their mounts and equipment. Candidates should understand reasons for their decisions and know when to seek assistance, if necessary. They must show, through discussion and demonstration, knowledge of veterinary care and teaching principles. Candidates should have the ability to explain stable and veterinary routines to D-level Pony Club members.

Tack

Identify and discuss the three basic bit categories: snaffle, pelham and curb.

Identify different types of bridles, nosebands, saddles, pads, girths, martingales, breastplates, cruppers and boots. Discuss their use, purpose and fit.

Demonstrate and discuss fit of a snaffle bridle.

Conditioning

Discuss how to prepare a horse to be conditioned for activity of choice.

Present, discuss and evaluate a conditioning schedule of 8 weeks preparing a horse for a stated activity or competition (Pony Club or otherwise). In addition, you may present your record of daily riding.

Demonstrate how to take a horse's temperature, pulse and respiration at rest.

Nutrition

Discuss feeding principles and their effect on the mount's digestive system.

Discuss the 6 classes of nutrients needed by mount, why they are needed, and primary sources.

Identify and evaluate samples of hay, grain, and bedding for suitability and safety.

For your area, know availability, cost, and origin of feed.

List any supplements given to own mount and reasons for their use.

Discuss seasonal variations of feeding mounts.

Stable Management/Travel Safety

Identify five safety practices/precautions in this facility.

Identify three out of five examples/pictures of toxic plants in your area. Explain when they are most toxic, what parts are toxic and general symptoms of poisoning which would indicate a need to call the vet, i.e. change in temperature, pulse and respiration.

Discuss preparation of mount for safe, comfortable travel for short and long distances. Discuss preparation and checklist for vehicle and trailer safety.

Conformation and Lameness

Identify the anatomy of the front and hind leg from shoulder and hip down, to include principal bones, tendons and ligaments.

Discuss overall balance of conformation of mount being presented and how they relate to long-term soundness.

Discuss conformation of the mount as it relates to interfering, over-reaching, forging, brushing, paddling, winging.

Know what conformation points might contribute to the blemishes or unsoundnesses listed. Also, discuss the following common causes of listed lameness, giving location and inner structure involved: bog and bone spavins, bowed tendon, bucked shins, corns, cracks, curb, navicular, osselets, ringbone, sidebone, splints, suspensory problems, thoroughpins.

Veterinary Care and Record Book

(Health, Maintenance, Immunizations)

Must be kept up to date and brought to test.

Purpose: To supply an accurate and detailed outline of candidate's (or borrowed) mount's health care, feed schedule, hoof care, conditioning and competitive plan so, in case the candidate were laid up or called away for a prolonged period, the mount could be properly maintained. The candidate needs to present a written outline supplying the above information. Candidates may use the USPC Pony Health & Maintenance Record Book or, preferably, their own record system. Records should reflect the appropriate depth of knowledge for this level. Must have records for 12 months minimum prior to test. Records may reflect care of more than one horse.

Discuss age by teeth on presented mount (age of mount will be provided to you). Discuss special problems such as over- or under-shot mouth, cribbing, and reasons for floating.

Discuss teeth to include: concept of the eruption of the teeth, and baby teeth replaced by permanent; location of incisors and cheek teeth; number of teeth (male and female).

Discuss in depth your annual immunization and parasite prevention schedules for your horse in your record book.

Discuss the simple life cycle and damage caused by the following internal parasites: bots, ascarids, small and large strongyles, pinworms and tapeworms.

Discuss signs of mount in distress (including vital signs) and care needed.

Discuss how diseases are spread and what preventive measures can be taken to lessen the spread of a disease for stabled and pastured mounts.

Discuss causes, signs and symptoms and preventive measures for stabled and pastured horses for colic, laminitis/founder, azoturia/tying up, flu, strangles, tetanus, encephalomyelitis, rhinopneumonitis, heaves, choke, skin and tooth problems, West Nile virus, and rabies, and care needed. Discuss how diseases are spread and care needed.

Teaching

Teach unmounted lesson of choice at D-2 – C-1 Standard, to D-1 – D-3 Pony Club members (limit 10 minutes).

Present two 20-minute written lesson plans, one for flat work and one for jumping, up to C-1 Standard.

Discuss how to do a safety check and other safety aspects of teaching.

Candidate must bring a letter from DC stating that he/she is assisting in simple mounted lessons at the D and up to C-1 level with supervision. A minimum of six hours teaching prior to the test is suggested.

Bring all teaching tools to your unmounted lesson. If it is a lesson in the barn proper footwear is required. Medical releases for all students must be on the grounds.

Foot & Shoeing

Identify the principal outer and inner structures of the foot and their function.

Identify basic farrier tools.

With tools, imitate how to remove a shoe.

Identify common types of shoes, two materials they are made of, widths, and common features such as fullered grooves, heels, clips, concave surface, bar features and studs.

Land Conservation

Provide a letter from the DC certifying the candidate's involvement in a local, regional, or national equine land conservation issue or project. This letter will be brought to the test and the candidate will discuss the project or issue with the Examiners.

H/H-A STANDARD

Horse Management Expectations

Candidates must demonstrate a sound knowledge of horses, their care, equipment, and training requirements. They must be able to teach stable management and conduct mounted lessons, showing an understanding of safety practices and teaching techniques appropriate to different age levels. They must demonstrate the ability to make informed decisions about all aspects of running a barn, including daily routine and emergency procedures.

PART 1 - Stable and Pasture Management

Presentation

Show a mount in hand as if for sale. Show the mount to its best advantage, according to its suitability for the breed. The mount should be shown in a correctly fitted bridle, with at least 3 braids, and the candidate should show control of the mount while at the halt, walk, and trot. The candidate should dress appropriately, in riding attire, including helmet, gloves and a whip, as if prepared to show how the mount performs.

Discuss general condition of the mount, giving an evaluation of age, breeding, and shoeing. Discuss the mount's conformation, way of going and disposition related to the suitability for an appropriate activity and performance level.

When aging by mount's teeth, be familiar with the foal's mouth, the maturing and aging of incisors and cheek teeth, and the incisors' shapes as wear progresses, tooth angles, wolf teeth, Galvayne's groove, and cheek teeth wear. Explain differences among a foals mature and an aged horse's mouth.

When identifying mount's shoeing, be familiar with: keg, feathered edge shoe, polo, fullered, eggbar, heart bar, rocking toe, aluminum wide web, aluminum race plates, clips, caulks, studs (tapped shoes).

Discuss suitability and fit of tack used on the presented mount.

Tack

Describe inspection of saddlery for safety and fit, to determine need for adjustment, repairs and/or padding.

Describe procedures for reclaiming neglected tack and for storing tack.

Know how to make temporary adjustments in ill-fitting tack, such as saddle on withers, cantle too low, leathers too long, bridle too large, reins too long, bit too large or small, broken tree. Discuss elements of safety when making tack adjustments.

Recognize types of bits and saddles, their fit, actions, and applications for various mounts. Indicate which discipline and level for which the equipment is appropriate. Bits: English snaffles, double bridle, curb, pelham, kimberwick, gag, elevator, and hack-amores. Saddles: all purpose, dressage jumping, close contact, etc.

Discuss correct fitting, uses and misuses, of different types of bits, saddles, girths, martingales, overgirths, draw reins, side reins, boots, cruppers, and breast plates.

Record Book

Present a conditioning book to show an understanding of keeping records and finding information.

Stable Management

Outline a complete parasite control program for a stable; give reasons for this program including deworming drug classifications and fecal egg count relative to parasite cycles.

Discuss a program for yearly inoculation and for tooth care.

Describe ways to prevent spread of contagious diseases throughout a stable.

Describe procedure for morning and evening inspection of horses for health and safety in stable and in pasture.

Describe ways to aid a mount that is cast in its stall.

Describe a mount in poor condition and suggest several possible causes.

Stable Construction/Pasture Management

Discuss good stable construction for safety and health, with attention to ventilation, drafts, light, drainage, protection of pipes in freezing weather, manure management, refuse disposal, rodent and insect control, and storage of feed, bedding, stable equipment and tack in accordance with local agricultural practices.

Discuss proper grazing and paddock management, including watering systems, fencing, mowing, shelter, and poisonous plants in your area.

Discuss the importance of soil testing, fertilizers, pasture rotation, and seeding for proper soil management (in accordance with local agricultural practices).

Nutrition

Demonstrate ability to purchase feed responsibly by discussing the characteristics, advantages, and disadvantages of different types of grains, pellets, sweet and mixed feeds, bran, and extruded feeds.

Discuss common sources of protein, fat, fiber, and carbohydrates in typical equine rations for mounts: aged, growing, working.

Discuss interpretation of the nutritional value of feed available from label information and know resources to expand this information.

Discuss minerals, vitamins, electrolytes and some of their sources and possible dangers involved in misuse.

Discuss appropriate rations - to include composition of concentrates vs. roughages and percentages of protein, fat and fiber - for a variety of mounts (i.e. aged, growing, working, idle and breeding).

Discuss cost of and safe storage methods for different varieties and quantities of feed.

Discuss criteria used to determine whether or not feed supplements or nutraceuticals are needed. Discuss benefits and dangers of use.

Discuss differences in care, as related to seasonal weather changes for mounts at grass.

Land Conservation

Discuss the relationship between land conservation concerns and initiatives and equine sports and horse management. Discussion may include current and future challenges from the local area to the global environment.

Describe appropriate methods to include land conservation awareness into an unmounted curriculum.

PART 2 - Veterinary Knowledge

Health/Systems/Diseases

Identify major anatomical parts and describe basic functions of the following systems: respiratory, urinary, circulatory/lymphatic, nervous, digestive, reproductive, and skeletal.

Locate and discuss the following disorders/diseases according to the anatomical system involved, causative agent, signs, and care: colic, choke, heaves, laminitis, periodic ophthalmia, rhinopneumonitis, influenza, encephalomyelitis, tetanus, strangles, equine infectious anemia, rabies, Potomac horse fever, equine venereal (viral) arteritis, EPM (Equine Protozoal Myelitis), and botulism,

West Nile, metabolic disorders, (PPID, Cushings, insulin resistance).

Discuss predisposing factors, including symptoms and care of mount for the following: fever, tying up, inflammation, edema, arthritis, shock, and dehydration.

Discuss diseases associated with travel and exposure to strange mounts.

Bandaging

Discuss and demonstrate proper application of shipping and stable bandages. (Sheet cottons and flannels are recommended, and candidates may be asked to demonstrate with these as well as with other materials brought.)

Demonstrate application and know how to maintain any of the following bandages: sweat, poultice, pressure, spider, figure eight, knee, hock, cold water, and ice. Discuss values and potential dangers when any of them are prescribed.

Special Care

Discuss common tranquilizers, sedatives, anti-inflammatories and analgesics; specifically Acepromazine (PromAce), Xylazine (Rompun), Flunixin (Banamine), Dexamethasone (Azium), Phenylbutazone (Bute), Torbutrol (Torbugesic), Ketoprofen (Ketofen), Detomidine (Dormosedan), Hyaluronic Acid (Legend), Romifidine (Sedivert), Polysulfated Glycosaminoglycane (Adequan), Surpass (Diclufenac). Know why above listed drugs are used and possible hazards involved.

Discuss specific precautions when shipping, feeding and restraining a sedated mount.

Discuss both benefits and dangers of using twitches.

Describe other methods of physical restraint, from mild to aggressive.

Travel Safety

Discuss techniques for loading and unloading difficult mounts.

Discuss possible causes for loading problems.

Discuss ways to transport mares and foals.

Conformation and Lameness

Discuss lameness which might be associated with conformation faults, to include:

base wide	straight upright pasterns
base narrow	standing under
cow hocks	bench knees
sickle hocks	knock knees
toe-in	calf knees
toe-out	over at the knee
contracted heels	bow leg
camped out in front	straight stifle
long sloping pasterns	

Observe a mount in action and assess his athletic ability and suitable use as it may be affected by any of the conformation faults listed above and below: straight shoulder, long back, parrot mouth, too long or short neck, mutton/high withers, various slopes of croup, slab sided, overshot jaw, ewe neck, shortness of stride.

Observe a mount's motion and identify front and hind leg soundness and unsoundness.

Discuss the anatomy of the leg, including bones, joints, principal tendons, and ligaments from the shoulder and hip down.

Be able to determine 1 or 2 appropriate disciplines for presented horse.

PART 3 - Teaching & Training

Teaching Techniques

Know techniques included in USPC Manual of Horsemanship, Vol. III and be able to demonstrate knowledge of those skills as acquired through teaching experience.

Discuss ways to handle the following lesson situations: mixed age or skill group, effective use of assistant, interfering coach or parent, unsuitable mount, runaway mount, disobedient mount, fall of rider, arguing student, uninterested student, fearful, student, mount or student in unfit condition, change in weather or environment prior to or during lesson.

Discuss techniques to discover if students have:

physical handicaps	problems beyond teacher's
visual handicaps	ability or training to solve
learning disabilities	hearing handicaps

Discuss skills that would be covered in teaching a C Pony Club member to longe a mount safely and effectively.

Demonstrate knowledge of D, C, and B Standards requirements.

Discuss and demonstrate as directed the use of general first aid equipment. Discuss instructor emergency preparedness and risk management suitable for any teaching situation. For the safety of their lessons they should bring with them: hat, cell phone, local emergency number (might not always be 911), address of where you are teaching, rubber bands, extra pair of rein stops, tape measure, towel, whip, spurs, gloves, first aid kit and your teaching tools, example: cones. Know the local phone numbers for a farrier, vet, ambulance and fire department. All candidates should be in riding attire including proper footwear. Medical releases for all students must be on the grounds.

Teaching a Class

Prepare a lesson plan for assigned lesson. Topics will be assigned by examiners.

Demonstrate teaching a safe, informative 15-to-20-minute lesson to a group of 3 to 5 riders (D-1 to B or adult volunteers) on the flat and/or over fences.

Evaluate the lesson plan used and discuss whether the teaching objective was achieved, how the lesson could be improved, and what, if any, changes were made to the lesson plan for safety considerations.

Discuss a student's riding position and suggest three exercises to help solve any problem, including exercises on the longe.

Discuss safety considerations when setting up a jumping lesson, including use and spacing of cavaletti/trotting poles.

Training/Longeing

Discuss and demonstrate proper fit and use of equipment, including side reins.

Discuss and demonstrate safe, confident, effective longeing techniques.

Demonstrate techniques for longeing appropriate to the mount's level for exercise, training, and/or warm-up to include free forward movement and to establish regular rhythm

Discuss additional safety precautions to be considered when longeing with a rider.

Evaluate performance and level of mount before, during, and after longeing session.

TESTING INFORMATION FOR NATIONAL TESTINGS

Requirements for Candidates

- Be a Pony Club Member in Good Standing, as defined in club policy, having paid local, regional and National dues and fees for at least the current and preceding years.
- Have a record of regular attendance and participation.
- Be at least 13 years of age prior to January 1 of the year of application for the H-B and C-3, 14 for the B, 16 for the H/H-A and A.
- Be recommended by the District Commissioner and Regional Supervisor.
- Candidates may take the H-B or C-3 Riding test in whichever order they choose. If the C-3 Riding test is taken first, the C-3 Certificate is not awarded until completion of the H-B; candidate is recognized as a C+ until that time.
- Fulfill the active participation criteria set by the region.
- Compete in at least one mounted rally on a mounted or unmounted basis.
- Have a thorough knowledge of requirements for the ratings and be able to discuss and/or demonstrate any requirements from all previously attained standards.

Attire

Safe, working attire, including proper footwear, must be worn in the barn area and when working around mounts. Proper informal attire (boots and breeches) is required for teaching mounted lessons, longeing, and riding phases. Refer to USPC Horse Management Handbook, USPC Rules for Eventing, and USPC Manuals of Horsemanship, Volume I, II and III.

ASTM/SEI approved headgear with full harness and with chin strap in place must be worn.

Equipment

Saddlery and biting for USPC Testings should comply with the Horse Management General Rule on Saddlery and Biting and with the USPC discipline rules for Saddlery and Biting. Be able to discuss equipment used on own mount. Whips, no longer than 43 inches including lash, will be allowed in the flat section of testings. Any discipline rule change following publication of the current Horse Management Handbook will supersede these rules.

General

There are no waiting periods between the H-B/C-3 through A ratings, as long as all applications are submitted by the Application Deadline (see below). However, candidates must successfully pass all sections of the H-B before obtaining the C-3 (if they pass the riding test first, they are called C+ members until they pass the H-B) and all sections of the H-A before taking the A.

Test dates are established by the National Testing Committee in response to Regional* requests. Candidate applications must be made through the District Commissioner and Regional Supervisor. Candidates may apply for the date of their choice, but those living within the host Region will be given priority. Information on testing dates, sites and equipment needed may be obtained from the District Commissioner, Regional Supervisor, the USPC Web site, or the National Office.

Testing applications, USPC medical release, and club check for the test fee, must be mailed by the DC to the RS. The RS must forward all completed application materials (with required signa-

tures) to USPC National Office postmarked by the Application Deadline (see below). Applications for the H/H-A must include proof of compliance with the First Aid requirement.

Application Deadlines

Applications for testings must be postmarked by the following deadlines: tests held between February 26th and May 31st must be postmarked by January 15th; tests held between June 1st and August 31st must be postmarked by April 15th; tests held between September 1st and November 25th must be postmarked by July 15th; tests held between November 26th and December 31st must be postmarked by October 15th. Any testing held before February 26th will have a six week prior deadline, as indicated on the Testing Schedule. Late applications will be handled by the National Office and National Testing Committee and a \$100 late fee will be charged to any late application that is accepted.

H/H-A applicants must provide proof of successful completion of a basic first aid certification course (typically a 4-hour course) with their testing application. Candidates planning to take their H/H-A should make plans early to get their certification done well before the testing application deadline in case their class is canceled or rescheduled. A copy (both sides) of their current First Aid card **MUST** accompany application or it will be considered incomplete and returned to their RS. Proof of enrollment in a course **is not** acceptable; candidate must have completed the course by the application deadline, and include a copy of the First Aid card with the H/H-A application. There are many different organizations offering first aid certification and any basic first aid course is acceptable.

Candidates may bring their own or a borrowed or rented mount to a testing.

Candidates who DNMS on no more than four sections of the H-B or two sections of the H/H-A can retest only those sections not passed. It will be the candidate's choice whether to retest at another scheduled H-B or H/H-A testing or arrange for a retest outside of a testing. If they choose the second option, it is the responsibility of the candidates to check the Examiners List provided by the National Office to find a qualified examiner who can retest them on the necessary section(s). If they wish to retest at another scheduled testing, they must contact the National Office within 4 weeks of their testing to make arrangements. Retests must take place within the calendar year. Any exceptions to that deadline must be approved by the National Office and the National Testing Committee. There is no charge for retesting.

To achieve the C-3, B and A ratings, candidates must pass all phases of the test. No riding phase can be retested.

Appropriate Horse

It is the responsibility of the candidate and his/her parent(s) or guardian to bring an appropriate horse(s) to the testing. The conditioned mount(s) must be capable of completing all required phases of the test. The mount(s) must also be available for change of riders. Embracing USPC's commitment to safety for all horses and riders is of utmost importance. Failing to follow these guidelines may make it difficult for the candidate to meet the standard on that given day.

Candidates should do outside reading and independent study in an effort to expand knowledge and understanding of all aspects of horsemastership. For the appropriate testing level, this in-depth study should develop sophistication in riding, maturity in training a mount or rider, and flexibility to adapt to horsemastership techniques that vary according to geographic area.

Candidates should also prepare themselves through practical experience in all requirements and possess a thorough understanding of the level tested. However, it is at the discretion of National Examiners as to what is covered during a test.

No candidate shall be allowed to take the test "just for the experience."

The testing shall be a constructive working session. The candidate shall be required to demonstrate and maintain adequate ability in performance and knowledge for the level tested.

Candidates should discuss with the Examiner any problems with the mount being used, should ask questions, and request permission to repeat any performance if so desired.

The attitude and maturity of the candidate shall be considered throughout the testing. Respect for other people and handling of the mounts shall be considered a direct reflection of the candidate's maturity level.

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