

**HORSE RIDING CLUBS ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA INC.**

<b>DRESSAGE GEAR CHECKERS GUIDELINES</b>
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A HRCav gear check is **NOT** a safety check. Competitors are solely responsible for the correct fit and safe condition of their gear; rather it is a check to ensure that the Competitor is using the correct gear allowable under HRCav Rules.

A Gear Checker **SHOULD NOT** alter or interfere with a Competitor's gear (eg. tighten the girth). They may however suggest to the rider that an adjustment is advisable - the **Competitor** should see to any alteration, if they feel it is necessary. This advice is for the Gear Checkers own protection as any interference that may result in injury to horse or Rider may render the Gear Checker responsible, or in an extreme case, liable to prosecution.

**SADDLE:**

Any type of saddle (except side-saddles) is permissible however if a single buckle girth is used a surcingle must be fitted. Saddle covers (such as sheepskin, rain-covers, etc) are not permitted. Monkey grips are permitted.

**BRIDLE:**

A bridle with a snaffle bit is compulsory for Levels 5-2. A snaffle or simple double bridle is optional for combinations assessed to compete at Advanced and Level 1.

**NOSEBANDS:**

Any of the nosebands illustrated in Plate 4 of the Dressage Rules may be used. Nosebands must not be so tightly fixed as to harm the horse.

**BREASTPLATES:** Are permitted.

**NECK STRAPS:** Are permitted.

**TOE STOPPERS:** Are permitted

**MARTINGALES:**

Running martingales are only permitted in Level 5. These must be fitted with keepers on the reins. Stoppers also must be fitted even when run through a breastplate. Standing martingales are **NOT** permitted at any Level.

**SPURS:**

Not allowed for Level 5 Competitors. Spurs are permitted for Level 4 through to Advanced Competitors. The arms of the spur must be smooth. Spurs must be made of metal and there must be a shank pointing directly back or down from the centre of the spur. If rowels are used, they must be free to rotate and must not be sharpened.

**WHIPS:**

A dressage whip with a tail/tassel or riding crop with flap may be carried in all Levels. Whip not to exceed 1.2 metres including tassel.

**HELMET & BOOTS:**

An approved equestrian helmet with a fixed harness must be worn at all times whilst mounted. Short or long riding boots must be worn. Chapettes/gaiters are permitted.

**CLUB COLOURS:**

Registered Club colours must be worn on the rider's upper body with the Club name or logo displayed on the upper body garment and/or saddle blanket. In hot weather, the Ground Jury may allow competitors to remove outer layers of clothing (ie: club colours) and ride in shirt sleeves.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

Any other gadgets such as bearing, running, balancing or side reins are not permitted. Boots, bandages, ear muffs, blinkers and hoods are not allowed.

**BITS:****SNaffle BITS**

Only snaffle bits having combinations of the following features are approved for use in Dressage Tests.

- Metal
- Metal and rubber (bits made only of rubber or rubber and chain not permitted)
- Metal and synthetic material
- Rigid plastic

Snaffle bits and bridoons made only of metal must meet the following criteria:

- All parts of the bit coming into the horse's mouth must be of metal (not necessarily the same metal)
- The minimum diameter of the mouthpiece is 10mm
- Mouthpieces may be the same thickness or tapered towards the centre or central joints
- There shall not be more than two joints in the mouthpiece
- Double jointed mouthpieces may have one 'roller', or rotating middle piece, in the centre section. Multiple rollers are not permitted
- All parts coming into the horse's mouth shall be rounded, smooth and not ridged, sharp or corrugated.
- The rein must be free to move on the bit ring and must not be fixed to any secondary ring or 'hook'
- Keeping with the definition above, some of the types of bits permitted are described and illustrated in Plates 1 & 2. Also permitted but not illustrated are: Half moon – port mouthed - curved
- Rubber or synthetic bit – both jointed and unjointed
- Sweet iron bit

Hanging cheek snaffle including Baucher bit

Permitted bits

- 1) Ordinary snaffle with double-jointed mouthpiece
- 2) Ordinary snaffle with double-jointed mouthpiece, known as "French Snaffle" (refer also Plate 2)
- 3) Ordinary snaffle with jointed mouthpiece
- 4) Racing snaffle
- 5) Egg-butt snaffle (a) with cheeks (b) without cheeks
- 6) Other types of snaffle with cheeks
- 7) Rubber snaffle, unjointed
- 8) Unjointed snaffle
- 9) Hanging cheek snaffle including baucher bit.
- 10) Myler bits complying with the above requirements

**DOUBLE BRIDLE BITS**

A Bridoon must comply with the following:

- Must be made of metal or rigid plastic and may be covered with rubber (bits made only of rubber or rubber and chain not permitted).
- If metal bits are used, all parts of the bit coming into the horse's mouth must be of metal (not necessarily the same metal)
- The minimum diameter of the mouthpiece is 10mm
- Double jointed mouthpieces may have one 'roller'. Or rotating middle piece, in the centre section. Multiple rollers are not permitted.

Permitted Bridoon bits – refer Plate 3

A Curb bit must be of a type as detailed in the illustration on Plate 3. the limits of the dimensions of the curb bits allowable are as follows;

- The curb must be of metal or rigid plastic and may be covered with rubber (bits made only of rubber or rubber and chain not permitted)
- The minimum diameter of the mouthpiece is 14mm
- The level arm of the curb bit below the mouthpiece should not measure more than 10cm when the mouthpiece is at the uppermost position.

Optional items (not compulsory)

- Lip strap
- Leather cover for curb chain
- Rubber cover for curb chain

Permitted Curb Bits (refer Plate 3 Dressage Rules).

1. Half moon curb bit.
2. Curb bit with curved cheeks and port.
3. Curb bit with loops for lip strap on the cheeks and with port.
4. Curb bit with port and sliding mouth piece (Weymouth)
5. Curb chain
6. Lip strap (optional)
7. Curb chain guard (optional)
8. Curb chain guard (optional)