

HORSE RIDING CLUBS ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA INC.

DRESSAGE GEAR CHECKERS GUIDELINES
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An HRC AV 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 HRC AV 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). Saddle to be secured by two points of attachment (ie: double buckle girth or single buckle girth and surcingle) or a double wrapped latigo. The rear cinch on a western saddle does not constitute a second point of contact. 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. Reins can be made of cotton or a mix of cotton & synthetic. Elastic loops or inserts are not allowed. Padding is permitted under bridles as long as it is securely attached. A Micklem Competition Bridle may be used in all levels. The bit clip is not permitted. One Eared bridles are not permitted.

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 or interfere with the horse's breathing. Two fingers should be easily inserted under the noseband on the bridge of the nose. An official may direct the rider to demonstrate that the noseband is fitted correctly.

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: see DR 18.1

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, must not be sharpened and must be in a vertical plane.

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.

SHOES, BANDAGES AND HOOF BOOTS:

Shoes are not mandatory. Glued on shoes or shells are permitted provided the bulbs of the heels and the coronet bands are clearly visible. Scoot Boots are allowed in competition. No other boots are approved for use.

Bandages & other protective coverings are allowed in the Warm-Up area but not past gear check. No plaster, tape, belly band or towel may be worn at any time at an event whether the skin is broken or not.

BLINKERS: Not permitted

EAR BONNETS:

Ear bonnets are permitted and may also provide noise reduction. Ear bonnets must not cover the horse's eyes and ear plugs are not permitted.

NOSE NETS:

Nose nets are only permitted with written approval by the HRC AV. An Exemption Certificate will be supplied.

PLEASE NOTE:

Any other gadgets such as bearing, running, balancing or side reins are not permitted. Bandages, 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
- Snaffle bit with a port but with a straight line between the rings is permitted.
- Forward curved bits are permitted but not with hanging cheeks and must have a joint.
- Bits with gag action are not permitted
- Bit guards and cheekers are not permitted.
- A Pelham bit is not permitted in any dressage test.
- Wrapping of bits is not permitted.

Permitted bits – See DR 15.5 for Illustrations

- 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 12mm
- The lever arm of the curb bit below the mouthpiece should not measure more than 10cm when the mouthpiece is at the uppermost position.
- The upper cheek must not be longer than the lower cheek
- The curb chain must lie flat against the horse's chin.

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)