

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
Standard	12/1/2025	1/30/2025	

Rule Change Intent

This rule change adds in the two new test levels (Advanced Walk/Jog & Level 6) that WDAA is currently drafting tests for. Because the increase in difficulty from the current Level 4 & Level 5 was seen as too steep, the current Level 5 description and test will be changed to Level 6, and a new description and tests will be added as in between these two levels, as Level 5.

Proponent Details	Contact Information
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Linked Rules	Comments
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## SUBCHAPTER WD-8 TESTS

### WD130 General

The WDAA approves and issues tests for use at Federation licensed and WDAA recognized competitions in the United States. Tests cannot be modified without approval of the WDAA with the exception that gaited horses must be ridden at the saddle gait instead of the jog in Western Dressage classes. A link to the tests is located on the Federation website at [www.usef.org](http://www.usef.org). Competitions are permitted to hold gaited classes but they are to be held as separate classes. If gaited classes are not being held at a competition, then gaited and non-gaited horses are permitted to compete together in the same class. The gaits required in lieu of the jog are defined in Subchapter WD-2.

1. **Introductory Level.** Tests provide an introduction to the discipline of Western Dressage; the horse performs only at the gaits of walk and jog. The rider may sit or post the jog. The rider should demonstrate correct basic position, use of basic aids, and understanding of the figures. The horse should show relaxation and harmony between horse and rider is important. The horse accepts the aids and influence of the rider. The jog should be a natural gait within the horse's scope and should demonstrate a swinging back. To be eligible for Intro Level, a horse/rider combination must not have shown in a Western Dressage Test at Level 1 or above in the same competition year.

2. **Basic.** Tests confirm that the horse is supple and moves freely forward in a clear and steady rhythm, accepting light contact with the bit. The horse demonstrates a greater understanding of the aids and calm acceptance of the bridle; greater emphasis is placed on relaxation, willing cooperation, harmony, rideability and pure gaits. The horse is beginning to develop more impulsion and balance.

3. **Advanced Walk/Jog.** Tests provide a more advanced understanding of the aids than Basic Level, but are still performed at the Walk and Jog only. The rider should demonstrate correct position and the use of the aids, particularly in the lateral movements. The horse should show suppleness of the topline, a harmonious performance, and be softly on the aids. The regularity and quality of the gaits are considered in all movements.

4. **Level 1.** Tests confirm that the horse is building on the elements from lower levels and is developing more engagement to show sufficient impulsion as the lengthened jog and lope are performed. The horse demonstrates a more consistent light contact with the bit. These tests introduce some collection and lateral and longitudinal balance, suppleness, and emphasize harmony and rideability.

5. **Level 2.** To confirm that the horse, having achieved the impulsion required in Level 1, now accepts more weight on the hindquarters (collection); moves with an uphill tendency; especially in the lengthened paces; and is reliably and lightly on the bit. A greater degree of straightness, bending, suppleness, balance and self carriage is required than at Level 1.

6. **Level 3.** To confirm that the horse has achieved the impulsion required in Level 2, now accepts more weight on the hindquarters (collection); moves with a greater degree of an uphill tendency as required in the collected gaits especially in the collected lope *and rein release*. The horse must maintain a light contact on the bit showing balance, self-carriage and energy that result from improved engagement and weight-carrying by the hindquarters as performed in the collected lope. The movements should be performed with greater bending, suppleness, balance and self-carriage than in Level 2.

7. **Level 4.** To confirm that the horse has achieved the impulsion, engagement, uphill balance and self-carriage required in Level 3. Level 4 movements should be performed with greater engagement, straightness, suppleness and balance. The marked lightness of the forehand results from a distinct lowering of the haunches and thoroughness required to perform the partial lope pirouette. A solid foundation is evidenced throughout by a correct, willing, harmonious performance softly on the aids.

8. **Level 5.** Tests confirm that the horse has achieved the suppleness, impulsion, thoroughness, and clear uphill balance required in Level 4. The marked lightness of the forehand resulting from improved engagement and collection is demonstrated in the half lope pirouette. The flying lead changes reveal the responsiveness and obedience of the horse to the aids. A solid foundation is evidenced throughout by a calm, willing, harmonious performance. The regularity and quality of the gaits are considered in all movements.

9. **Level 6.** To Confirm that the horse has achieved the suppleness, impulsion, thoroughness and clear uphill balance required in Level 5. The marked lightness of the forehand resulting from improved engagement and collection is demonstrated in the full lope pirouette. The flying lead changes in series reveal the responsiveness and obedience of the horse to the aids. Obedience to the aids and adjustability is confirmed through more demanding transitions and movements. A solid foundation is evidenced throughout by a calm, willing, harmonious performance with light use of aids. The regularity and quality of the gaits are considered in all

*movements.*