



2025 USEF Dressage National Championship Qualifying Requirements

Developing Horse

Approved by the USEF Board of Directors on November 18, 2024.

The 2025 Dressage Developing Horse National Championships (“Championships”) Qualifying Requirements published herein are effective November 18, 2024 unless stated otherwise. The qualifying criteria published herein are subject to additions or revisions. This Championship qualifying criteria pertains to the following divisions:

- Markel/USEF Developing Horse Prix St. Georges Dressage National Championship
- Markel/USEF Developing Horse Grand Prix Dressage National Championship

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For questions concerning these Qualifying Requirements, please contact the USEF Dressage Department at festival@usef.org. These Championships will be conducted under USEF Rules except where outlined otherwise herein.

I. Deadlines and Membership Requirements for Application.

For these Championships, qualification goes with the athlete/horse combination. Athletes are permitted to compete with only those horses named on a properly submitted and completed application.

Application Deadlines:

1. Athletes wishing to earn an invitation to these Championships must successfully complete an online application. The online application will be available beginning December 1, 2024.
2. Athletes are permitted to compete at these Championships with only those horses named on the athlete’s application (i.e., athlete/horse combination or combination).
3. Scores are permitted to be earned prior to the submission of the application.
4. Applications completed between December 1, 2024 and May 15, 2025, at 11:59pm ET will be assessed a seventy-five dollar (\$75.00) fee per horse.
5. Applications completed between May 16, 2025, and June 17, 2025, at 11:59pm ET will be assessed a one hundred fifty-dollar (\$150.00) fee per horse.
6. Additional horses must be added to an existing application by June 17, 2025 at 11:59pm ET and will be assessed a seventy-five dollar (\$75.00) fee per horse.
7. No application will be accepted after June 17, 2025 at 11:59pm, ET and no refunds will be given after the closing date.

8. An application is considered complete once the confirmation email is received. It is the athlete's responsibility to ensure that the rider and horse information listed in the confirmation email is correct. If the athlete does not receive the confirmation email, it is the athlete's responsibility to contact USEF (festival@usef.org) to determine if the application has been received.
9. Following the close of the applications on June 17, 2025 at 11:59pm, ET, only combinations which have completed an application for the Championships will display on the ranking lists.
10. By signing the application, the athlete and owner(s) certify that they have received, read, and understand the [USEF Rules](#), [USEF Code of Conduct](#); USEF Release, Assumption of Risk, Waiver and Indemnification; Qualifying Requirements, [U.S. Center for SafeSport Code](#) and the [USEF Safe Sport Policy](#) including the [Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies](#); the [Non-Discrimination Policy](#); and the [USEF Whistleblower & Anti-Retaliation Policy](#) and that they understand these documents, and that they agree to be bound by them.

Membership Requirements for Application:

Athlete: Athletes must be a U.S. Citizen and a Competing member in good standing with USEF at the time of application through the conclusion of the Championships, and for the combination to earn scores on their respective ranking list.

Athletes are eligible to compete in these Championships from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach the age of sixteen (16).

Horse: The horse must be recorded with USEF pursuant to USEF GR1102, and in good standing at the time of application through the conclusion of the Championships, and for the combination to earn scores on their respective ranking list. Horse Identification (HID) Numbers DO NOT fulfill the above requirements.

Ponies or mules are not permitted to qualify for or compete in these Championships.

Horses must fit into one of the following age categories for competition. Per DR119.10, the horse's age is counted from January 1 of the year of birth to January 1 of the current competition year. FEI Rules apply in CDI competition:

Prix St. Georges:

- Become seven (7) years of age in 2025.
- Become eight (8) years of age in 2025; or
- Become nine (9) years of age in 2025.

Grand Prix:

- Become eight (8) years of age in 2025.
- Become nine (9) years of age in 2025; or
- Become ten (10) years of age in 2025.

Horse Owner(s): A horse owner(s) must be a Competing member in good standing with USEF at the time of application through the conclusion of the Championships, and for the combination to earn scores on their respective ranking list.

Ownership may change during the qualifying period and up to the close of entries for the Championship, as long as the new owner(s) meets all of the above criteria.

All the above owner requirements apply to all listed owners on file with USEF, including all owners of a partnership, farm, company, corporation, etc. if a horse is recorded as owned by that type of entity.

USEF strongly encourages all athlete, horse, and owner membership requirements be completed by June 5, 2025, or rush fees may be required to submit the application of intent by 11:59pm, ET on June 17, 2025.

II. Additional Eligibility Requirements for Qualifying Competitions and Championships.

FEI Registration: Athletes are not required to have an FEI Rider Registration to earn scores on the respective ranking lists or to compete in these Championships. If an athlete has an FEI Registration (inactive or active), they must have designated the USA as their sport nationality with the FEI to earn scores on their respective ranking list and to compete in these Championships.

An FEI Horse Registration, FEI Passport, or FEI Recognition Card is not required to earn scores on the ranking lists or to compete in these Championships.

For CDI Events, FEI Registration and Passport Rules apply.

Breed Registration: Owners must be in possession of the horse's valid registration papers with a member of a national studbook, which is recognized by the World Breeding Federation for Sport Horses (WBFSH), or with a recognized national breed registry. Horse must have registration papers, but entry is NOT limited to WBFSH members (i.e., FEI Passport or Recognition Card, Jockey Club, AQHA papers are accepted). These Registration papers must be submitted to USEF by end of business (5:00pm ET), no later than July 21, 2025, to receive an invitation to these Championships.

III. Qualifying Competition Specifics.

Qualifying Period: The qualifying period shall begin January 1, 2025 and end July 21, 2025 unless otherwise noted by USEF no later than February 4, 2025.

Qualifying Competitions: A series of national competitions held throughout the U.S. have been designated as USEF/NAYC Qualifying Competitions and the list of these competitions is available on the USEF website here.

Qualifying Competitions also include all U.S. and foreign CDI1* and CDI2* events. The 2024 FEI Calendar is found [here](#) and please note that the 2025 FEI Calendar will not be published on this link until approved by the FEI, no later than December 31, 2024.

For all divisions, please check regularly for updates to the FEI Calendar and the USEF/NAYC Qualifying Calendar as changes to competitions may be posted at any time.

Qualifying Competitions held over the course of a weekend are considered one qualifying opportunity, even if they have separate license/recognition numbers.

Judging Panels for National Qualifying Competitions: Qualifying tests must be officiated by a panel of at least two (2) USEF 'S' and/or FEI judges. For CDI Events, [FEI Dressage Rules](#) apply. See Section V for Conflicts of Interest.

National Level Competitions Outside of the U.S.: Horses that meet all age, registration, and ownership qualifications may qualify by competing at either [FEI competitions](#) or national level competitions in a foreign country. The applicable division tests must be used. However, all foreign national level competitions must be approved by the USEF Dressage Sport Committee or its designees prior to the start of the competition. All other requirements as outlined above including application, eligibility, qualification period, judges, scores, etc. will apply for this method of qualification. Copies of the entire score sheet(s) must be submitted to and received by the USEF Dressage Department (festival@usef.org) no later than the end of the qualifying period for consideration.

One Athlete Rule: When qualifying for these Championships, 24 hours prior to the start of the competition through the conclusion of the competition, any horse entered in a USEF Qualifying class must not be ridden by anyone other than the athlete entered in that class on that horse, under penalty of disqualification from the class for USEF championship qualifying purposes. Exception: grooms riding on a loose rein. For purposes of this rule, the competition starts when horse or pony and athlete arrive on the show grounds. For CDI Events, [FEI Dressage Rules](#) apply.

Dress and Saddlery: A snaffle or double bridle is permitted for the USEF Developing Horse Prix St. Georges Test, USEF Developing Horse Grand Prix Test, FEI Intermediate II Test, and the FEI Prix St. Georges Test for national Qualifying Competitions and for these Championships.

The use of a whip will be permitted at national Qualifying Competitions.

If competing in a CDI event, all [FEI Dressage](#) and [General Regulations](#) must be followed.

IV. Qualifying Tests and Minimum Overall Average Specifics.

All tests listed below and completed at a national Qualifying Competition must be held in individual classes specifically designated as USEF or USEF/NAYC Qualifying in the prize list. Test of Choice (TOC) classes will not count. Hors de Concours (HC) entries are not permitted in USEF/NAYC Qualifying classes. Only one score per respective Test may be earned over the course of a weekend.

Prix St. Georges: Combinations must achieve a minimum overall average of 69% on the final ranking list to receive an invitation to this Championship by earning at least two (2) scores in the current edition of the USEF Developing Horse Prix St. Georges Test.

Additionally, combinations must earn at least two (2) scores in the current edition of the FEI Prix St. Georges Test. The FEI Prix St. Georges Test scores are not used in the calculation of a combination's overall average and will automatically be noted on the Final Ranking List.

Combinations cannot earn an FEI Prix St. Georges Test score in a national Qualifying Competition if completed in a CDI1* at the same event.

Combinations are not required to complete the FEI Prix St. Georges Test and the USEF Developing Horse Prix St. Georges Test at the same Qualifying Competition.

Grand Prix: Combinations must achieve a minimum overall average of 66% on the final ranking list to receive an invitation to this Championship by earning at least two (2) scores in the current edition of the USEF Developing Horse Grand Prix Test.

Additionally, combinations must earn at least two (2) scores in the current edition of the FEI Intermediate II Test. The FEI Intermediate II Test scores are not used in the calculation of a combination's overall average and will automatically be noted on the Final Ranking List.

Combinations cannot earn an FEI Intermediate II Test score in a national Qualifying Competition if completed in a CDI2* at the same event.

Combinations are not required to complete the FEI Intermediate II Test and the USEF Developing Horse Grand Prix Test at the same Qualifying Competition.

Calculation of the Overall Average on the Ranking Lists: Submission of score sheets to USEF is not necessary for these Championships unless requested by the USEF Dressage Department. For all divisions, scratches, eliminations, and withdrawals will not be penalized on the ranking list. International Qualification procedures as stated above must also be adhered to for scores to be counted.

Scores from the 2024 U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions are not permitted to be used towards qualifying for the 2025 U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions.

The ranking lists can be found [here](#) and will be updated as results are processed from national Qualifying Competitions and CDI events. It can take up to a minimum of 10 business days from the completion of a competition for results to reflect on the ranking lists. The ranking lists can be found [here](#) between July 10, 2025 and July 25, 2025.

USEF is not responsible for inaccurately reported scores. If errors are detected, athletes are encouraged to contact the USEF Dressage Department at festival@usef.org immediately.

For calculation purposes: USEF will automatically track scores for combinations which are earned at national Qualifying Competitions and CDI events.

Percentages are carried out to the third decimal point with numbers of five (5) and above rounded up (63.4555% = 63.456%).

Prix St. Georges: Only those scores earned in the USEF Developing Horse Prix St. Georges Test will be used to calculate the overall average.

If a combination earns three (3) or more scores in the USEF Developing Horse Prix St. Georges Test, the lowest score earned in this Test will be dropped. A maximum of one (1) score will be dropped. All remaining scores will be used to calculate a combination's overall average.

Grand Prix: Only those scores earned in the USEF Developing Horse Grand Prix Test will be used to calculate the overall average.

If a combination earns three (3) or more scores in the USEF Developing Horse Grand Prix Test, the lowest score earned in this Test will be dropped. A maximum of one (1) score will be dropped. All remaining scores will be used to calculate a combination's overall average.

Withdrawals: Withdrawals from these Championships must be submitted in writing to festival@usef.org. Withdrawals received between June 18, 2025 and July 21, 2025 will be noted as WD on the final ranking list.

V. **Additional Rules and Requirements.**

Conflict of Interest:

Judging Panels at CDI Events: Refer to [FEI Dressage Regulations for Judge Requirements and Codex for Judges](#).

Judging Panels at USEF National Licensed Competitions: Refer to [USEF Chapter 13, GR1304](#).

All competitors and officials are subject to the conflict of interest rules at USEF Licensed Competitions as outlined in the [USEF General and Dressage Rules](#).

Clean Sport:

[Equine Anti-Doping](#): All horses/ponies shall be subject to drug and medication testing during the qualifying period and at the Championship and the horse must meet all Federation drug and medication rules. Blood and/or urine samples may be collected at any time during the competition. Samples collected from horses/ponies will be tested for the presence of all substances forbidden and/or controlled by USEF. Any horse/pony whose sample contains a prohibited substance or a restricted substance in a concentration greater than USEF limits shall be subject to sanctions in accordance with USEF Rules.

[Human Anti-Doping](#): Athletes must adhere to all WADA, FEI, USEF and USADA protocols, policies and procedures. This includes participation in out-of-competition testing as required by WADA, FEI, USEF, and/or USADA rules, if applicable.

Grievance Procedures: Athletes wishing to file a grievance challenging a denial or threatened denial to participate in competition, please see the [Athlete's Guide to Filing a Grievance Regarding Opportunity to Participate](#) and [Opportunity to Participate Complaint Form](#). For procedural guidance for filing a grievance, please contact Emily Pratt at epratt@usef.org.

VI. Invitations to the U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions.

Invitations are anticipated to be sent via email no later than Friday, July 25, 2025.

For these Championships,

- Athletes are not permitted to compete with more than two (2) horses in each Championship division.
- The same combination is permitted to participate in one (1) division at the Championships.
- A horse is permitted to be competed in one (1) division at the U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions. *Exception, a horse that is also competed in the Developing Horse divisions is permitted to be competed in the USEF Dressage Seat Medal Finals pending confirmation of the final timetable.*

Final Ranking List: After the conclusion of the qualifying period (July 21, 2025), combinations will be ranked according to their overall average and be accepted up to the number of entries available, not to exceed 15 combinations.

In the case of a tie, the combinations shall remain tied but shall take up two places so that if tied for first place, the next ranked combination shall be ranked third.

If there is a tie for 15th place, all tied combinations will be invited, thereby increasing the total number of entries (i.e., 16 entries accepted).

Combinations not qualified as listed above may be invited to participate in these Championships if there is not a maximum of 15 qualified combinations on the Final Ranking List for a respective age group, not to exceed 15 unless there is a tie, if the following criteria is obtained:

- The combination obtained at least two (2) scores in the USEF Developing Horse Prix St. Georges Test and in the FEI Prix St. Georges Test or at least two (2) scores in the USEF Developing Horse Grand Prix Test and, in the FEI Intermediate II Test within the qualifying period.
- The combination's final overall average is within 1% of the minimum overall average as required per their respective age group and is the next highest overall average on the Final Ranking List.
- For clarification purposes to the above, the additional invitations are based upon the Final Ranking List posted no later than Friday, July 25, 2025 and not on the final entry list for these Championships.

Combinations ranked as an alternate, if applicable, on the Final Ranking List will be invited to the up until the close of the entry deadline published in the official prize list and in the invitation to these Championships. Once entries close for the U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions, additional combinations shall not be invited to participate.

Championship Information.

The 2025 U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions will take place on August 18-24, 2025 at HITS Chicago Lamplight Equestrian Center in Wayne, IL.

USEF Championship Rules will be followed and the Championship Format for each division will be available on the USEF website by March 4, 2025.

These Qualifying Requirements are based on the USEF and FEI rules and regulations as presently known and understood. Any change in the Qualifying Requirements caused by a change in USEF or FEI rules and regulations will be distributed to the affected athletes immediately. The Qualifying Requirements are based on the latest information available to USEF. However, the Qualifying Requirements are always subject to unforeseen, intervening circumstances, and realistically may not have accounted for every possible contingency. Changes in Qualifying Requirements are subject to approval by USEF.