

DRESSAGE FREESTYLE SCORING

The scoring of the freestyle is divided up into two major sections, known as Technical Execution, and Artistic Presentation.

Technical requirements

The technical section is made up of scores for each of the compulsory movements. The technical requirements of each level mirror the level of training and balance expected in the compulsory tests at that level. Competence and ease in the execution of the movements is crucial to a successful program.

While the Technical Execution is divided so as to make up half the final score (50%), the technical components of rhythm, energy and elasticity and harmony between horse and rider are scored on the artistic portion score sheet as replacement for the collective marks on a set test, additionally, poor technical execution can negatively affect the degree of difficulty, Choreography and Music scores, thus the technical execution make up nominally 70% of the final score, and can affect all of the marks.

Artistic

The Artistic score is usually divided into 5 sections each with a coefficient of four at International competitions,^[1] They are:

- Rhythm, Energy and Elasticity
- Harmony between horse & rider
- Choreography
- [Degree of Difficulty](#)
- Choice and Interpretation of the music

The Rhythm, Energy and Elasticity mark comprises the first two collective marks from a set test, that being Paces and Impulsion, while the Harmony between Horse & Rider mark is made up of the second two: Submission and Rider. The remaining scores are somewhat connected to the technical execution, but are for the most part dependent on the artistic qualities of the test.

Choreography

The choreography must incorporate all the technical requirements for the level but is otherwise open to creative choices and highlighting the horse's strong points. Good marks are awarded to inventive choreography which contains movements not taken directly out of the set tests, but has an element of surprise and adventure to their placement. However, there should still be a logical order and flow to the movements, such as symmetry and without too many changes between the paces. A chaotic freestyle would score worse than a basic one.

Music

The music chosen will depend on the horse's movement, type, personality, and the rider's own musical tastes but should serve to accentuate all of them. Music for freestyles can be found in a variety of styles; Classical music, show tunes, movie scores, orchestral versions of pop and contemporary music are common choices.

Generally, it is preferred that the music for all three gaits should be of the same genre.

The interpretation of the music means that it should enhance the horse's way of going and match the tempos of his gaits. The music should suggest the movements; transitions should correspond to the transitions in the music. It is imperative that the choreography interpret the music. Movements and figures should be started and finished at obvious musical phrases.

Degree of difficulty

The level of difficulty should correspond to the horse's abilities so that the ride looks easy. A horse which is more advanced horse for any given level will be able to perform more complex movement combinations, or more extreme movements (e.g. 720° pirouette, 2:3 Half-Pass etc.) which are rewarded as being more difficult. However, this comes at the increased risk of loss of rhythm or a mistake in sequence, which would result in more marks lost that would have been gained. A good freestyle program is entertaining to the audience and pleasing to perform.