

DRESSAGE: RIDING THE PRELIM 1A TEST

Handy Tips from an EA Dressage Judge on how to ride the 2019 Preliminary 1A Dressage Test



OPENING POINTS: We will go through and explain how to ride each movement of the test. The movements in **BOLD** are coefficient - this means the score for this movement is doubled. Remember that all trot work is optional, sitting or rising. Many riders think if they sit to the trot, they will score higher, however unless your horse is forward and soft through the back sitting to the trot is not easy, attempting this can be uncomfortable for the rider and the horse.

1	A X	Enter in working trot Halt, Salute Proceed in working trot
2	C E EA	Track left Circle left 20m Working trot
3	A	Circle left 20m, developing left lead canter in first quarter of circle
4.	AFB	Working canter
5	Between B & M	Working trot
6	C CE	Medium walk Medium walk
7	EF FA	Change rein in free walk on a long rein Medium walk
8	A AE	Working trot Working trot
9	E EC	Circle right 20m Working trot
10	C	Circle right 20m, developing right lead canter in first quarter of circle
11	CMB	Working canter
12	Between B&F FA	Working trot Working trot
13	A X	Down centreline Halt, Salute

Try and have a good straight entry onto the centre line. Remember that the halt can be made through the walk, as you come down the centre line approaching X a few paces out bring your horse to walk then to a halt. If your horse is steady and still, leave them be. The halt may not be perfect but by trying to correct it you may make it worse. Count to 3 in your head. Remember to take both reins in one hand at the salute. Again, you can walk a few paces and then trot.

At C when tracking left, try and ride a clear bend into the corner. At E when riding your circle, try and break it into four segments and ride to each point bending and flexing your horse to the left, look up and around your circle, ride them around your inside leg with your outside leg a little behind the girth to keep the quarters in. From E to A ride straight.

The canter transition needs to be calm. Before A, prepare your horse with a half halt, then gently ask for the canter. Ensure you are on the correct lead, bending and flexing to the left. If you strike off on the wrong lead this must be corrected, or you could have a course error.

As you approach B, start to prepare your horse for the transition to trot. ½ halt, brace your back, deepen your seat, gently keep legs on, use a slightly stronger ½ halt to make the transition as 'smooth' as possible. If you just pull on the reins the horse will probably raise his head lose some balance and 'fall into the trot'.

Before C start to slow your rising to indicate to your horse that there is a change of pace coming. At C bring him to a walk. REMEMBER: A medium walk is a walk with purpose or marching, your horse should remain lightly on the bit in a frame/outline. If your horse resists the bit give with your hands a little, holding on to the rein will probably make him more resistant. It is better to have a longer outline than a horse showing tension.

As you turn onto the diagonal at E, allow your reins to lengthen and your horse to stretch down. you should still have a light contact, so you are not just holding the buckle. At F, begin to shorten your reins and continue in medium walk, this will start to prepare your horse for the next movement.

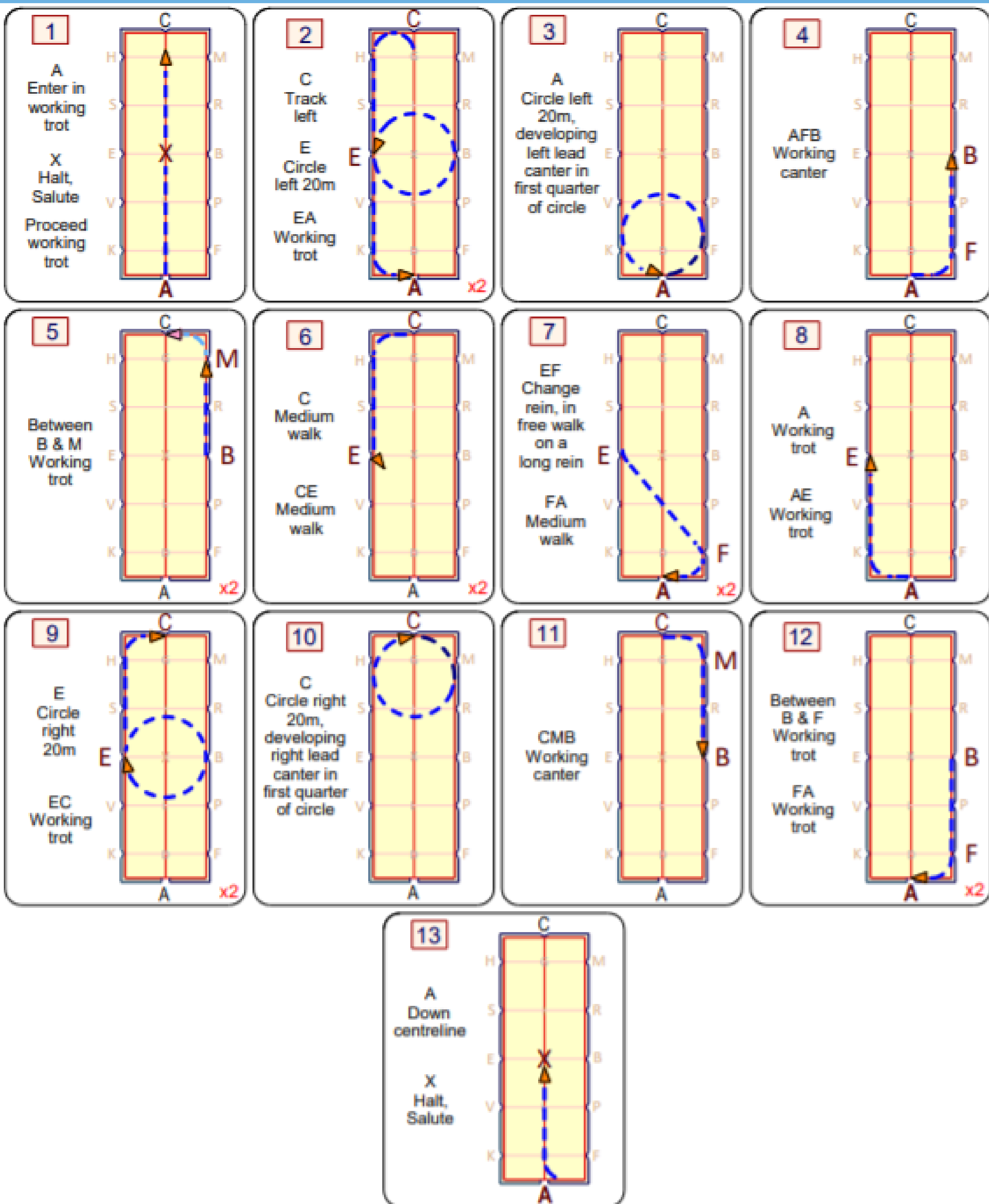
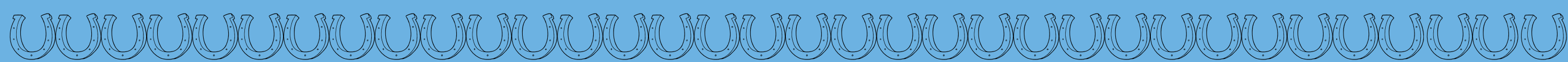
Keep your horse straight and at E start your circle showing a clear bend onto E.

Keep the bend and flexion to the right.
Remember a 20-metre circle goes from one side of the arena to the other.

Movements 10 11 and 12 are a mirror image of movements 3 4 and 5 on the right rein.

You will want to show a good clear bend onto the centre line. Keep straight, look ahead, steady hands. Keep the transition smooth, remembering you can walk into the halt. Count to 3. Both reins in one hand and salute. Smile - you are have done it!

For our more Visual Learners, we have the Prelim 1A Test Diagram Below:



Leave arena in walk on a long rein at A