

SEASON
2025



Directives for the Dressage Regional Group 7 Freestyle Challenge

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

The Freestyle Challenge is held from 1 January to 31 December 2025 between the G7 countries in accordance with the FEI Rules for Dressage Events and Veterinary Regulations currently in force. In those points where the current Directives do not correspond to the FEI Dressage Rules these Directives take precedence over the Rules.

The riders compete in their own country, the results count towards Group 7 regional rankings. There will be individual classification in every Freestyle Level.

2. PRINCIPLES

The event is open to a maximum of 40 starters in total.

The G7 Dressage Freestyle Challenge consists of the following classes:

1	Preliminary Freestyle	<i>the difficulty level of FEI Children Preliminary A and B Tests</i>
2	Elementary Freestyle	<i>the difficulty level of FEI Children Team and Individual Tests</i>
3	Medium Freestyle	<i>the FEI Junior Freestyle</i>
4	Advanced Freestyle	<i>the difficulty level of FEI competitions for 7 y.o. horses</i>
5	Inter I Freestyle	<i>the FEI Intermediate I Freestyle Test</i>

The Preliminary and Elementary Freestyles are used for both youth category and seniors with separate individual classification. The Medium, Inter I and Advanced Freestyles are only for seniors.

NFs are completely free in their choice whether to either enter all athletes into one class or to divide them among all levels. However, the maximum number of not more than 40 combinations must be respected.

3. AGES

Minimum age of horses:

Preliminary Freestyle - 5 y.o.;

Elementary and Medium Freestyles – 6 y.o.;

Advanced and Inter I Freestyle – 7 y.o.;

Athletes:

Youth category - 12 - 16 y.o.;

Seniors – minimum 16 y.o.;

Athletes who are 16 y.o. can choose in which category they want to compete;

4. FORMULA

Day 1:

The arrival of an FEI Judge

Horse Inspection (evening prior to the competition day or on the morning of the competition)

When the G7 Freestyle Challenge is combined with a FEI World Dressage Challenge conducting one horse inspection for both will be enough.

Day 2:

Freestyle Challenge Competition Classes:

Note: The order in which the classes are scheduled is not imposed.

Day 3:

The judges' departure

5. PARTICIPATION

The G7 Freestyle Challenge is open to athletes who have nationality or are legal residents of the country. Athletes living outside of their country of nationality may choose whether to compete for their own country or for their country of legal residence.

The Freestyle Challenge is open to all horses and ponies of any origin provided they have successfully passed the Veterinary Inspection. Both horses and ponies can be ridden in all categories by seniors or youth.

Restrictions:

In order to be eligible to participate in the G7 Freestyle Challenge the rider must have at least one score (on any horse) of over 60 % in any national or international test with the degree of difficulty above Introductory level (above walk/trot classes).

If an athlete/horse combination within the previous 5 years competed in any official national or international competitions and scored 63% and above in a test of a certain level of difficulty → this combination can only enter the Freestyle class which has the degree of difficulty on the similar level or above (not lower) in accordance with the following directives:

- an athlete/horse combination, which previously received 63% in a Small Tour Level can only enter the Inter I Freestyle.
- an athlete/horse combination, which previously received between 56% and 62% in a Small Tour Level can only Medium, Advanced or Inter I Freestyle.
- an athlete/horse combination which received 63% in any national/international test with single flying changes in canter can only enter Medium, Advanced or Inter I Freestyles.
- an athlete/horse combination which received between 56% and 62% in any national/international test with single flying changes in canter can only enter Elementary, Medium, Advanced or Inter I Freestyles.
- any athlete/horse combination which received 63% in any national/international test with simple changes in canter can only enter Elementary, Medium, Advanced or Inter I Freestyles;

- the Preliminary Level Freestyle is only open for horse/rider combinations who never received 63% and above in in any national/international test with simple changes in canter.

It is the responsibility of the National Federation to select the participants (horses/athletes) for this Competition in strict accordance with the participation rules and make sure that Athletes and Horses comply with these rules.

6. ENTRIES

An Athlete or a Horse are allowed to start maximum twice in the Challenge Freestyle classes, as below:

- Athlete/horse combination can start only once;
- Athlete: an athlete is allowed to start twice on two different horses in the same class or in different classes but the choreography of the Freestyle and music must be different.
- Horses:
 - A horse of 5 yrs of age may only start once.
 - A horse of 6 yrs of age and older is allowed to start twice under different riders in the same class or different classes but the choreography of the Freestyles and music must be different.
 - A horse that competes in the Inter I Freestyle can only start once a day.

7. HEADGEAR, DRESS, SADDLERY

In accordance with the FEI Dressage Rules with the following exception:

- Saddles can be dressage / jumping / eventing / universal.
- The Preliminary and Elementary Freestyles must be ridden in a snaffle bridle. For Medium and Inter I Freestyles it is optional whether to use a snaffle bridle or a double bridle.
- Black or dark colour half chaps with proper boots are allowed.
- Whips are not allowed in the competition, only in training and warm up.

8. HORSE INSPECTION

Any horse participating must have passed a horse inspection carried out by the FEI Judge and the FEI Veterinary Delegate.

9. GROUND JURY

All tests should be judged by one or two FEI Dressage Judge/s not lower than 2L/3*. In case of 1 judge - the judge should be sitting at C. In case of 2 FEI judges – one judge should be sitting at C and the other on either E or B.

National Federations are responsible for inviting the FEI Judge and covering all the travelling arrangements as well as for their per diem (judging day + 1 travel day) and accommodation (hotel should be not less than 4*, 3 hot meals per day).

10. DRAW

Ordinary draw in accordance with the FEI Dressage Rules shall be used.

11. CLASSIFICATION

There will be 7 REGIONAL INDIVIDUAL CLASSIFICATIONS:

- Individual classification for seniors separately for every level (5 classifications);
- Individual classification for youth category in Preliminary and Elementary levels (2 classifications);

The OC within each country is free to add national individual classification and is responsible for the distribution of prizes.

The regional INDIVIDUAL CLASSIFICATION is as follows:

The winner is the athlete having the highest total points converted into percentage, the second the one with the next highest total and so on. In case of equality of points for the first, second and/or third places the higher artistic mark will decide. If artistic mark are the same, the higher mark for harmony will decide. If still tied the higher mark for choreography will decide. In case of equality of % for remaining places, the athletes are given the same placing.

The same tie breaking rules will be used for determining a winner in case of equality of points for regional qualification. This is why the Organizing Committees are required to make copies (photos) of the protocols with marks for the 3 winning athletes in every category and keep them until the regional classification is finalized in the end of the season.

Immediately after the competition:

In order to establish a regional classification between all participating countries, results signed by the official Judges must be sent to the following e-mail: imcnamee32@gmail.com The regional classification will be provided to all participating Federations.

12. PRIZEGIVING

The Organizing Committee within each country is responsible for the distribution of prizes in the normal way during the competition. In addition the 3 best individual riders from the regional G7 rankings in every category will be awarded during the FEI Regional Group 7 General Assembly in 2026.

GUIDELINES FOR CREATING & JUDGING A FREESTYLE TEST:

TIME

In the case of a Freestyle test being clearly above or below the required time limit there will be a deduction of 0.5% (percentage points) from the total of the artistic score.

ERRORS

For all kinds of technical failure or errors see FEI Dressage Rules.

CHOREOGRAPHY

Choreography must show creativity and originality without overasking the horse. Judges should be able to recognize a symmetrical, balanced and well planned floor plan. All the movements must be clearly recognizable for the judges.

MUSIC

Music must fit to the rhythm and tempo of all gates. All transitions must be made in time with the music. If this is not so → the mark for music will be significantly reduced. For a higher mark the music has to also emphasize different movements. Vocals are allowed but preferably should not be too dominating.

REINS IN ONE HAND

Reins in one hand for a few special movements can increase the mark for Harmony and DoD.

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY

The basic requirements of the Freestyle are achieved when the athlete shows all compulsory movements listed in the test sheets for each level. The athlete can increase the degree of difficulty and raise the score for his performance (when executed with technical correctness) by:

- Appropriate repetition of single exercises, especially the exercises with a coefficient.
- Exceeding the minimum requirements of the exercises (example: longer shoulder in) but without exaggeration.
- Showing a steeper angle than requested in half passes or leg-yieldings;
- Executing the movements on lines without the support of arena rails, such as on the inner track, the quarter or centre line, or on angled or curved lines, (e.g. circle or serpentine).
- Well-chosen placing of movements in positions that make their execution more difficult.
- Well-presented clearly defined combinations of movements.
- Showing demanding and difficult transitions (example: harmonious transitions out of an extended pace to halt)
- Performing movements or transitions with the reins in one hand but without exaggeration.

A well-calculated risk is demonstrated when the Degree of Difficulty corresponds to the potential and the level of training of athlete and horse.

ENTRANCE AND HALTS

The first and the last halt and salute have to be shown on the centre line in the direction of C.

WALK

Each walk should be shown 20 m consecutively on a straight or curved line (not in a lateral movement).

½ walk pirouettes (180°) and turns on the haunches may be embedded into the walk.

Example: it is allowed to show 10 m of walk → then ½ walk pirouette or turn on the haunches → then 10 m of walk. This will count as 20 m of walk.

½ WALK PIROUETTES, TURNS ON THE HAUNCHES

In order to be properly evaluated ½ walk pirouettes and turns on the haunches have to come from walk and lead to walk. The judges must be able to recognize at least 3-5 walk steps before and after this movement. It is obligatory to demonstrate correct execution of these movements (from walk to walk) at least once.

Not allowed: it is not allowed to show more than ½ walk pirouette or 180° turn on the haunches. If the rider deliberately exceeds these requirements the mark for all walk pirouetted / turns on the haunches will be < 5 and the marks for DoD and Choreography will be maximum 5,5.

VOLTES, CIRCLES

The compulsory voltes / circles in canter must be shown at least once in true canter, not in counter canter! If left out or shown only in counter canter, the mark for this volte has to be <5 and the marks for Choreography and DoD maximum 5,5.

In addition to the compulsory volte / circle with the required diameter it is always allowed to show voltes / circles with a different diameter in trot or canter as a part of choreography (they will not be evaluated but may positively influence marks for Choreography and DoD). The minimum permitted diameter of the volte is 8m.

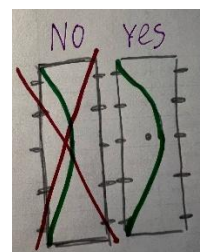
LATERAL WORK

- Shoulder-in is required to be shown in collected trot and over a distance of minimum 12 m.
- Half passes in trot should be shown at least 5 m sideways to make them count as compulsory movement.
- Counter changes of hand (zig-zag half passes) in trot are allowed starting from Medium Freestyle level.
- Leg-yielding is allowed in all levels, but when it is not mentioned in the protocol it will be considered as a part of choreography (no mark given). Showing leg-yielding in a form of a zig-zag is allowed.
- Only one counter change of hand in canter half passes is allowed for Medium Freestyle level.
- Counter changes of hand (zig-zags) in canter half passes are allowed only starting from Advanced Freestyle Level.
- Travers, renvers is allowed starting from Elementary level as part of choreography.
- The angles of half passes and leg-yieldings are at the athlete's discretion. However, half passes and leg-yielding shown below the steepness of the relevant standard tests will be regarded as very easy.

Mistakes: A mistake in a flying change directly at the end of a half pass reduces the mark for the half pass itself (except in Medium level FS where every change has a mark of its own).

COUNTER CANTER

Counter canter must be clearly recognizable to the judges and must be shown not less than the required number of meters stated in the protocol. If shown on a loop, the loop should be not less than of 15 m deep (go beyond X).



EXTENSIONS

- For welfare reasons, extended trot should only be shown on a straight line. A very slight curve (e.g. a loop along the long side) is allowed. If extended trot is shown only on a strongly curved line, the technical mark has to be < 5 and the marks for choreography and DoD cannot be higher than 5,5.
- Medium trot on the circle line or through 2 corners is allowed but must be clearly recognizable to the judges.
- Extended, medium trot on a short diagonal is allowed.
- Extended canter is permitted on a curved line / circle line (circle must not be less than 20 m).
- An incorrect flying change in the transition back from extended canter reduces the mark for the extended canter (except in Medium level Freestyle where every change has a mark of its own).

TRANSITIONS

- Transitions which are more difficult than in the required level are allowed and (if properly executed) will positively influence the mark for Choreography and DoD.
- A transition from extended trot or canter into halt should not be shown too abrupt but rather fading into the halt (welfare of the Horse!).

CANTER PIROUETTES / HALF PIROUETTES

- Canter pirouettes (half, full) must be shown at least once to each side from collected canter to collected canter. It is recommended to show at least 3 canter strides before and after.
- Canter pirouettes (half, full) performed from/into halt, walk are only counted if in addition to a correct pirouette to the same side (from and into canter). If they are the only ones shown to one side, the technical mark for the pirouette to this side has to be below 5 and the marks for choreography and DoD cannot be higher than 5.5.
- A combination of pirouettes left/right should at least have 3-4 canter strides in between.

FLYING CHANGES IN CANTER

In the Medium level Freestyle it is allowed to show flying changes only in sequence of not less than 5 strides.

DEDUCTIONS IN THE CASE OF OMISSIONS OR OF AN EXECUTION NOT ACCORDING TO THE RULES

1. Omissions (no mark possible for the technical execution).

If a compulsory movement has been left out completely and deliberately the judge has to give a zero (0) for this movement. The scores for Choreography and DoD cannot be higher than max. 5,5.

2. Movements of a higher class (= a movement that is not mentioned in the test sheet at all):

If a competitor deliberately shows movements of a higher class (= which is not mentioned in the test sheet!), no mark for the technical execution of that movement is possible. The scores for Choreography and degree of difficulty, cannot be higher than max. 5,5.

Examples for movements of a higher class (if deliberately executed):

Preliminary Freestyle: flying changes, canter half passes, canter pirouettes, piaffe, passage;

Medium Freestyle: canter pirouettes, piaffe, passage...

3. Execution not according to the Freestyle Rules:

A movement required in the test sheet has been shown, but in the wrong way. This means that a mark for the technical execution is possible but has to be very low.

- exceeding the requirements deliberately:

Showing pirouettes / half pirouettes in walk and canter with an angle more than allowed.

Showing tempi flying changes in less sequence than allowed.

Showing canter half-passes with more than one counter change in a Medium Freestyle level.

If this has been shown deliberately, the mark for the technical execution of that movement has to be below 5, regardless of this movement having also been shown correctly. No averaged marks are permitted. The scores for Choreography and DoD, cannot be higher than max. 5,5.

Example: In a Medium level Freestyle clearly more than a half-pirouette in walk.

- execution not as required in the Rules:

If a compulsory movement has been shown deliberately not as required but without exceeding the requirements and not having been shown correctly at least once, the mark for the technical execution of that movement has to be below 5. The scores for Choreography and DoD, cannot be higher than max. 5,5.

But in addition to correct execution these movements are allowed.

Example: Walk not shown on straight or curved lines but performed clearly as a lateral movement. Extended trot shown on a circle line as the only execution.

- execution below the requirements:

If a compulsory movement has been shown deliberately below the requirements and without having been shown correctly at least once, the mark for the technical execution of that movement has to be below 5. The scores for Choreography and DoD not more than 5,5.

But in addition to a correctly executed movement it is allowed.

Example: Clearly less than 20m of collected or medium walk.

4. Mistakes of the Athlete:

If the athlete tries to influence the public with his hands the Harmony mark should be reduced by 0,5 points. The movements concerned should be technically judged as usual unless the athlete influences the Horse with his hands. This should lead in addition to an insufficient technical score for the respective movement(s).

ADDITIONAL MOVEMENTS (of a higher class) FOR PRELIMINARY LEVEL FREESTYLE

Only in the Preliminary Level Freestyle is allowed in addition as part of Choreography to demonstrate the following movements of a higher class:

- turn on the haunches (to the left and/or to the right) or walk half-pirouette (to the left and/or to the right),
- simple change of leg,
- counter canter to the left / counter canter to the right;
- leg-yielding to the left / leg-yielding to the right;

These movements will not be evaluated with a technical mark but (if executed for a fairly good mark) will positively influence marks for Choreography and DoD.