



British Dressage

Tack & Equipment

BD Members' Handbook 2026 edition | Updated January 2026



Approved tack and equipment for competition
to be used alongside the Members' Handbook.

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Welcome British Dressage Tack & Equipment Guide

This revised pictorial guide has been devised to be used alongside the British Dressage Members' Handbook for clarification on permitted tack and equipment. British Dressage endeavours to mirror FEI Rules for permitted tack and equipment.

Tack reviews are ongoing but, any additional permitted tack and equipment updates will only be issued twice yearly to coincide with the beginning of the summer and winter seasons (1 January and 1 July).

At all BD Championships, there will be an appointed BD steward(s) in attendance in all warm up arenas responsible for tack and equipment checking every combination after they complete their test. This will be a physical (not just visual) tack check, including nosebands. It's the organisers' responsibility to appoint stewards for this function and they must be BD or FEI qualified to the appropriate level, for further guidelines on the official tack check, please see rule 118 in the 2026 Members' Handbook.

For the purposes of tack checking it will be the rider/groom's responsibility to remove ear hoods. The steward is not obliged to ask the rider/groom to remove ear hoods only if there is reason for suspicion. This check may also be carried out at the stable.

Equipment must be used as stated in the manufacturer's instructions, i.e. arrows illustrated on the correct side of bit.

For the complete guidelines on permitted tack and riding the test and penalties, please see section Section 1 of the Members' Handbook. If the equipment that you are looking at are similar to those pictured, it's permitted for use in BD competitions. If you have a query on any tack, bits or equipment that you're unsure about, please email a picture of the item to the Member Experience Manager for clarification, as manufacturers and/or tack shops may not be able to provide information on permitted equipment.

NB:

Please note that bridles without a manufactured throatlash will be permitted for use for national competitions, for international competitions please check FEI rules.

Bitting

Rings and cheeks

Any combination of permitted cheeks and permitted mouthpieces can be used under BD rules.

Item	Illustration	Status
Eggbutt (also permitted for bridloons)		
Loose ring (also permitted for bridloons)		
Sleeved cheeks Not for use as a bridle.	 	
Shaped sleeved cheeks		
Full cheek or Fulmer Not for use as a bridle.	 	
Hanging cheek or Baucher Not for use as a bridle.	 	
D-ring		
Various gag cheeks		
Myler (or similar) cheeks for use with hooks		
Bevel bit or cheeks		

Item	Illustration	Status
Cable single jointed		
B-ring snaffle		
Dr Bristol		
Mouthpiece with single rotating central piece		
Jointed barrel mouthpiece		
Low ported barrel		
Double jointed plastic bit		
Straight bar with textured mouthpiece (various material including Happy mouth)		
Hippus C1100		
Kimblewick or Magennis		
Flex control bit		 Not permitted as a bridoon

Item	Illustration	Status
Ported un-jointed bit	 	 Not for use as a bridle.
Mullen Mouth (including flexible mouthpieces)	 	 Not for use as a bridle.
Bits with a central plate	 	
Double jointed snaffle (including French Link and double ball joint)	  	
Cable double jointed bit		
Ported Barrel		 Not for use as a bridle.
Single jointed snaffle including lock-up (NB lock up snaffle may not be used as a bridle)	  	
Vibrating bit		

Item	Illustration	Status
Rotating baucher		
Winning Tongue Plate NP Bit (any type)		
Various mouthpieces (including leather mouthpieces)		

Bitting Weymouth

Item	Illustration	Status
Plastic covered Weymouth		
Weymouth with downward deviation		
Weymouth with sliding arms		
Weymouth with jointed or rotating arms or mouthpiece	 	

Bitting

Accessories and clips

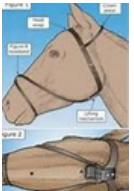
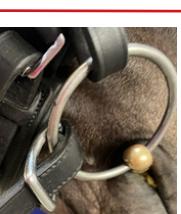
Item	Illustration	Status
Bit guards		
Elastic inserts for rein/cheek pieces		
Bit clips on ergonomic bridles or loops on full cheeked snaffles		
Latex tape that forms bit guard		
Curb chain cover		
Curb bar/chain		
Elastic curb chain		

May be leather, rubber, sheepskin or neoprene.

Tack

Bridles and nosebands

Item	Illustration	Status
Bridle with anatomical/padded headpiece	 <p>Double bridles may be used with a cavasson noseband only.</p>	
Combination or ergonomic bridles (clips on Micklem are not permitted)		
Adapted Quantum double bridle (only as pictured)		
Adapted Quantum Competition Snaffle (only as pictured)		
Clip cheeks and reins		

Item	Illustration	Status
Cornell Collar		X
Dyon X-Fit Anatomic		✓
Dyon Difference (double and snaffle bridle)		X
Stubben Snaffle 2500 Freedom		✓
Headpiece with adjustable/flexible section		✓
PS of Sweden noseband		✓
Reins with large stops/handholds		X
Reins with buckles as shown		✓

Item	Illustration	Status
Drop noseband		
Figure of eight or Grackle noseband (sheepskin pad under crossover section is permitted)		
Flash noseband		
Tota Comfort System noseband		
Looped/modified reins (including knotted reins)	 	 Unless dispensation is granted
Padding in addition to manufactured noseband		
Driving noseband or noseband with inconsistent/reduced padding over the nasal bone.	   	
Other bridles not permitted	    	

Bridles are to be used in the conventionally accepted manner and must consist of a browband, cheek pieces and noseband unless a combination bridle is used.
Bridles are to be black, brown, grey or navy, coloured piping is permitted.

Tack

Saddles and stirrups

Item	Illustration	Status
Western saddle		
Treeless or close contact saddles		 All saddles must have a cantle and pommel
Side saddle		 NB Organiser and judge must be notified prior to competition
Arabian Saddle		
Iberian Saddle		
Magnetic or velcro stirrups/straps	  	
Any colour stirrups		
Safety stirrups with open branch to outside		

Saddles are to be black, brown, grey or navy - small panels of colour are permitted.

Equipment

Spurs and whips

Any spurs worn in British Dressage competition must be a matching pair and have a smooth band around the heel.

Item	Illustration	Status
Comb spurs		
Rowelled, rollerball and horizontal rowels	   <p>Rowels must have rounded ends - rowelled spurs with pointed ends will be removed</p>	
Spursuaders		
Swan neck spurs	 Fitted as illustrated	
Plastic spurs	   	

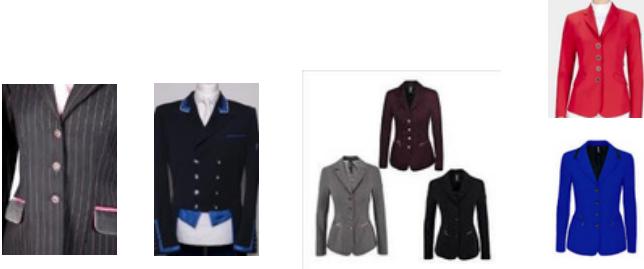
NB - Spurs - the shank of the spur must be horizontal to the ground or pointing down. Failure to adhere to this rule will result in elimination.

Spurs must be made of metal (which may be coated) and used in their manufactured state. Please see individual championship rules for specific rulings on whips and spurs in the BD Members' Handbook 2025. Spurs may now be worn at all levels.

Riders may carry one whip unless they hold a valid dispensation certificate. Whips may be used at Premier Leagues unless the selectors specify otherwise, but may not be used at Area Festivals, Associated Championships, Middle Tour Championships, Combined Training Championships, Regionals or Winter/National Championships. Failure to adhere to this rule will result in elimination from the class.

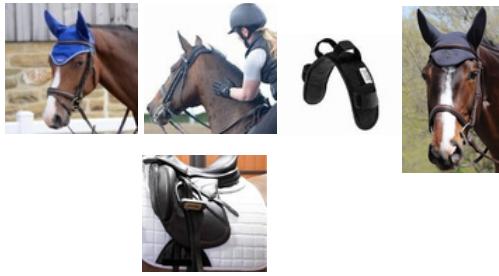
Equipment

Competitor dress

Item	Illustration	Status
Navy jackets with red collar and points with white piping (tail coat or short coat)		 Red collars with piping are not permitted unless you are a team rider. Please refer to rule 14 in the Members' Handbook
Jackets		Any single colour tailcoat or jacket will be allowed (coloured panels are permitted). Tweed jackets are permitted but should not have bold patterns. Accents, such as collars, cuffs or points of a different hue, modest patterns (including pinstripes) or crystal decorations are permitted.
Waistcoats (Gilets not permitted)		Members can wear a fitted waistcoat in any single colour, but these should not have bold patterns. Accents, such as a collar of a different hue, modest patterns (including pinstripes) or crystal decorations are permitted. Multicoloured coats, jackets or waistcoats are not permitted.
Show shirt		A long or short sleeved shirt that fastens at the neck with a tie, round collar or correctly fastened stock in any solid colour.
Mirrored hats		
Top hats		
Electronic devices/headsets		 Warm up ONLY unless dispensation granted in one ear only

Equipment

Additional accessories/equipment

Item	Illustration	Status
Fly veil/hood		
Infrared fly veil/poll guard/saddlecloth/titanium ears (ears only)		
Nose net (use with strap on the chin not permitted)		 Not permitted under FEI rules
Face masks		 Not permitted under FEI rules
Hoof boots		
Neck straps		
Ear plugs		 Only permitted for prize givings or inspections

Equipment

Additional accessories/equipment

Item	Illustration	Status
Exercise sheets		 Permitted for warm up only
Titanium/tight fitting mask		
Attached fly veil or hood		 Hoods must not be fastened to the noseband.
Nose tape/strips		
Body bandage		
Equivisor goggles		

Competitor Dress

Rule	Rule no.	Penalty
Hat - not worn	82	Elimination
Hat - incorrect colour	82	Two mark deduction
Hat - incorrect standard	82	Elimination
Jacket/waistcoat - not worn in Championship, Premier League or High Profile without judge's permission	78	Two mark deduction
Jacket - incorrect colour/pattern	78	Two mark deduction
Breeches - striped or bold patterned	83	Two mark deduction
Waistcoat - incorrect colour/pattern	78	Two mark deduction
Gloves - not worn	84	Two mark deduction
Boots - not suitable for riding	85	Elimination
Shirt - sleeveless/patterned	78	Two mark deduction
Gaiters - not matching boots	85	Two mark deduction
Spurs - Worn incorrectly, not as a pair, not made of metal/incorrect type/excessive use	91	Elimination
Whip - carrying at a Championship as per rule 92 (without dispensation)	92	Elimination
Carrying more than one whip without dispensation/excessive/inappropriate use	92	Elimination

Saddlery

Rule	Rule no.	Penalty
Saddle - incorrect colour	94	Two mark deduction
Saddle - western/other unspecified type	94	Elimination
Stirrups - none used/attached to girth by Velcro strap (without dispensation)/attached by mechanical or magnetic means	94	Elimination
Bridle - padding of cheek pieces/no noseband/no bit/bitguards/use of a double bridle at Intro, Prelim and Novice/use of tongue strap/additional noseband padding	97	Elimination

Saddlery continued

Rule	Rule no.	Penalty
Bridle - incorrect colour/decorated with tassels/ indiscreetly padded	97	Two mark deduction
Use of other additions/equipment/gadgets - martingales, side/running/draw reins, hoof boots, rugs	98	Elimination
Prohibited bits	104 & 105	Elimination
Boots/bandages/rugs/etc. worn into the space around the competition arena and/or during the test	102	Elimination
Unusual decoration	99	Two mark deduction
Numbers - none, or one/incorrect number on display	114	Two mark deduction
Incorrectly fitted tack or tack not in its manufactured	94 & 97	Elimination

Riding the test

Rule	Rule no.	Penalty
Exceeding maximum number of tests per day	120	Elimination
Commanders reading anything other than printed text	93	Elimination
Outside assistance by voice, signs etc in order to improve competitor's performance	117	Elimination
The use of headset/earpieces or other electronic devices within the test (without dispensation)	117	Elimination
Intentionally entering the arena before the signal to start	119	Two mark deduction
Failing to enter within 45 seconds of signal to start	119	Two mark deduction
Failure to start within 90 seconds of signal to start	119	Elimination
Incorrect/no salute	122	Two mark deduction
Repeating a movement (penalize as error of course and mark first attempt only)	129	Appropriate to error
Horse placing all four feet out of the arena where arena boards are continuous and less than nine inches high	123	Zero for that movement
Horse placing all four feet outside the arena where marked by a line or intermittent boards	123	At Judges discretion
Horse leaving arena when continuous arena board or surround is nine inches or higher	123	Elimination

Riding the test

Rule	Rule no.	Penalty
Leaving the arena not in control	123	Elimination
Rider dismounting without reason acceptable to judge	124	Zero for that movement
Fall of horse/rider	124	Compulsory retirement
Horse refusing to continue for a period of 20 consecutive seconds	125	Elimination
Use of voice at Championships	90	Two mark deduction per movement
Foul or obscene language	90	Elimination
When competitor makes error of the test (trots rising instead of sitting, doesn't take reins in one hand at salute etc)	130	Two mark deduction per movement
Rising trot in Advanced Medium and above tests	130	Two mark deduction per movement
Dressage to music test exceeding the time allowed or shorter than time given	126	Two mark deduction
Movements of a higher standard than level for Dressage to Music test being performed	126	Two mark deduction
Stallion disc/yellow cross band not shown when riding a stallion	101	Two mark deduction
Second rider warming up the horse before the first rider	116	Elimination for the first rider

Welfare of the horse

Rule	Rule no.	Penalty
Lameness	Welfare of horse	Elimination
Blood	Welfare of horse	Elimination
Hyperflexion	Welfare of horse	Elimination
Sensory hairs	Welfare of horse	Elimination



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