



Pre-Competition Checklist

Competitors should review the following checklist prior to each competition. It is easy to overlook something in your hurry to pack before travelling to the competition. Some things can be checked at home, others should be re-checked again, and others are last minute items, and may be easily overlooked during pre-competition jitters. Article 5.5-6 states: *“It is the responsibility of each driver to insure that harness and vehicle are in good repair and structurally sound. It is the responsibility of each driver to insure that his horse or horses are physically fit to fulfill the tasks required of them.”*

This Pre-Competition Check is being done before: ___Dressage ___Marathon ___Cones

Name of Competitor: _____ **Number:** _____

I have reviewed the following check list and believe that my horse(s)/pony(ies) and equipment are in suitable condition to complete the competition.

Signature of Competitor (parent or guardian if competitor is under 21 years:

The competitor should give this Check list to the steward prior to competition.

The Horse Check for:

1. **General condition**
2. **Shoe Condition if shod (shoes should be tight)**
3. **Girth Sores**
4. **Signs of injury, distress or poor hitching that can cause the above.**
5. **Signs of vision impairment**

The Harness Check for:

1. **Cleanliness**
2. **Fit**
 - a. **Breeching and breast collars** relative to the haunches/shoulder. Breast collars should neither obscure the movement of the forelimbs nor impinge upon the trachea. The breeching should not sweep the hind legs from the horse/pony when in use, and it should not slide up under the dock when not in use. It should also be tight enough to act as a breaking mechanism (about a hands breadth of space is recommended).
 - b. **Blinders:** (the eye should be centered , the cheek pieces should be tight enough to that they do not gap, allowing the horse to see between his cheek and the blinders, but not too tight that they cause the blinders to press against the eyes.)
 - c. **Crown piece:** (should fit securely so the bridle won't slip off over the ears)
 - d. **Throat latch:** (should not too tight, but if concern for bridle to come off, suggest adding gullet strap.)
 - e. **Nose band:** (should fit snugly, but not too low to inhibit breathing.)
 - f. **Bit:** (should fit correctly in horse's mouth. Horse can get tongue over a bit positioned too low in his mouth. Only legal bits are allowed. Articles 19, 120, 2016.5)
 - g. **Reins:** (the reins should be in the proper position. Reins in the bottom slot may be indicative of a problem!)
3. **Condition**
 - a. Excessive wear. (Harness should not show evidence of excessive wear or cracking)
 - b. Buckles (should not show evidence of wear)
 - c. Reins: should not show evidence of wear where attached to the bit.)
4. **Buckles.** (All buckles should be buckled and all straps should be in the keepers. There should be holes to allow adjustments in either direction if necessary.)

5. **Quick Releases:** (If used, are quick releases appropriately applied and are pull tabs/straps/cords set up to reduce chance of snagging and releasing inadvertently? Check that quick releases are turned with the pull to the inside.)
6. **Safety Belts:** (If used, are safety belts appropriately fastened to carriage and releasable in case of emergency. Note: Drivers with disabilities may have special requirements for safety harness.)
7. **Connections to Vehicle:** (Are connections to vehicle taped where appropriate? Note: Excessive taping is NOT desirable)
8. **Spares:** Should be in good condition. Rein and trace punches/splices should be appropriate to the material that the harness is made out of.
9. **Pole straps or Chains:** (Should be proper length and properly fastened.)
10. **Full Collar:** If full collar used, it should be the proper size and fit well.
11. **Breast Collar:** (Breast Collars should be used with a carriage that has single trees.)
12. **Saddle:** (Should be positioned correctly, without pressing on horse's spine. If a 2 wheeled vehicle, the saddle should be wide enough to carry the additional weight on horse's back.)
13. **Tug stops:** (Should be properly adjusted, wrap straps and over girth should not be excessively tight.)
14. **Back strap:** (Should be adjusted to proper tightness to keep saddle in place and crupper in proper position.)
15. **Shafts:** (Should be adjusted at the proper height).

The Vehicle Check For

1. **Wheels:** (Are they solid with all hub bolts present?)
2. **King bolts and singletree bolts** (Should be in good condition)
3. **Shafts/pole/singletree:** (Should be in good condition?)
4. **Shaft couplings/pole housings:** (Should be secure)
5. **Brakes:** (If applicable, Are they working properly? Have you checked the brake fluid?)
6. **Bolts** (Should be tight, check for missing bolts)
7. **Harness:** (Check for any unattached harness or improper hitching)
8. **Balance:** (Is carriage balanced correctly?)
9. **Shafts:** (Are shafts proper length)
10. **Distance between horse and carriage.**
11. **Slow Moving Vehicle Sign** (If required, is it securely attached to the vehicle?)
12. **Required Spares** at the Training and Preliminary Levels
 - a. Trace or splice
 - b. Rein or splice
 - c. Hole punch if using splices
 - d. Spare whiffle tree if pair and carriage has no roller bolts

For Teams:

 - a. Lead rein or wheel rein
 - b. Lead trace or wheel trace
 - c. Lead bar or main bar

The Driver/Groom/Navigator Check For:

1. **Whip**
2. **Gloves**
3. **Apron**
3. **Helmet(s) if required.** (Strongly recommended)
4. **Proper Attire:** Standing navigators need to wear appropriately grippy shoes (rubber soles are better than leather most of the time).
5. **Control** (Do you feel your horse/pony is sufficiently trained for the competition?)