

## Appendix—USDF Teaching Manual Articles

### PURPOSE OF TESTS

**USDF Introductory Level:** To introduce the rider and/or horse to the sport of dressage. To show understanding of riding the horse forward with a steady tempo into an elastic contact with independent, steady hands and a correctly balanced seat. To show proper geometry of figures in the arena with correct bend (corners and circles).

**USEF Training Level:** To confirm that the horse is supple and moves freely forward in a clear and steady rhythm, accepting contact with the bit.

**USEF First Level:** To confirm that the horse, in addition to the requirements of Training Level, has developed the thrust to achieve improved balance and throughness and to maintain a more consistent contact with the bit.

**USEF Second Level:** To confirm that the horse, having achieved the thrust required in First Level, now accepts more weight on the hindquarters (collection); moves with an uphill tendency, especially in the medium gaits; and is reliably on the bit. A greater degree of straightness, bending, suppleness, throughness, balance and self-carriage is required than at First Level.

**USEF Third Level:** To confirm that the horse, having begun to develop an uphill balance at Second Level, now demonstrates increased engagement, especially in the extended gaits. Transitions between collected, medium and extended gaits should be well defined and performed with engagement. The horse should be reliably on the bit and show a greater degree of straightness, bending, suppleness, thoroughness, balance and self-carriage than at Second Level.

**USEF Fourth Level:** To confirm that the horse has developed sufficient suppleness, impulsion and throughness to perform the Fourth Level tests which have a medium degree of difficulty. The horse remains reliably on the bit, showing a clear uphill balance and lightness as a result of improved engagement and weight-carrying by the hind quarters. The movements are performed with greater straightness, energy and cadence than at Third Level.