

# JUDGING CRITERIA FOR HORSEMANSHIP TEST (UPDATED 2025)

1. The horsemanship test is used to determine the riding ability and horsemanship skills of the mounted police officer. The riders should have a workmanlike appearance with seat and hands light and supple, conveying the impression of complete control should any emergency arise. The rider will be assessed for an independent seat, not relying on the horse to maintain balance and therefore control. The rider will also be evaluated for his individual partnership with the horse.
2. The riders will ride individual tests to be judged at the walk, trot/jog/gait, and canter/lope in both directions. The test may include a rein back and other miscellaneous tests to further determine the rider's ability. For the western test, riders may ride either one or two handed in whatever tack they would normally ride in. All jog work may be ridden sitting or rising, unless stated. No chaps are required and all should wear workmanlike attire. Gaited horses must also show a canter when called for.
3. Use or misuse of artificial aids such as whips, spurs, draw reins, gags, martingales (i.e. anything that would give the rider an advantage to control his horse and perform simple equitation movements); will be taken into consideration as they relate to the overall effectiveness of the rider.
4. Scores will be a percentage of each officer's cumulative points.
5. Riders must enter the arena at their scheduled time and may not be allowed to compete if late for the start of their scheduled pattern. When the bell is rung, the rider will have 20 seconds to begin their test.
6. The arena will be 20 meters wide and 40 meters long, approximately 66 feet wide and 132 feet long.
7. Calling Tests: If the test is announced, it is the responsibility of the rider to arrange for a person to announce the test. Unless an exception is made by the judge, the announcing of the test must start with the first movement. Lateness and errors in announcing the ride will not relieve the rider from "error penalties". Announcing the tests is limited to reading the movement as it is written once only. However, the repetition of reading of a movement is acceptable if there is a reason to doubt that the rider heard the original call.
8. Errors: When a rider makes an "error of the course" (takes a wrong turn, omits a movement, etc.) the judge warns him by sounding the bell. The rider will be shown, if necessary, the point at which he must take up the test again and the next movement to be executed then leaves him to continue by himself.

9. Judging: The scale marks as follows:

Points	Judges Term	Translates to:
10	Excellent	Awesome! Did someone get that on film?
9	Very Good	WOW
8	Good	really pleasant to watch
7	Fairly Good	Pleasant to watch
6	Satisfactory	Most of the pieces in place, but boring
5	Marginal	Slightly better than 4
4	Insufficient	Ugly but you did it
3	Fairly Bad	Movement recognizable but horrible
2	Bad	Hmmm... could have been??
1	Very Bad	Was that the movement?
0	Not Performed	WHAT... was that?

All half marks from 0.5-9.5 may also be used both for movements and collective marks, at the discretion of the judge.

