



USPC H-B and H-A Level COMPARISON Flow Chart
(for Standards Revised January 2024)

Please note: Although the content here is identical to that on the Standards of Proficiency, the order is not. Some of the /H-A requirements have been moved so that they can be compared side-by-side with the H-B. Please refer to the actual Standards of Proficiency and Test Sheets for each level to see how the requirements are actually grouped.

	H-B	H-A
Horse Management Expectations	<p>The H-B Certification requires a greater depth of knowledge and proficiency as members progress to become competent, all-around horsemen. The H-B certification emphasizes Horse Management knowledge and skills that demonstrate an increased awareness and competence in the care and handling of horses and equipment, and safety expectations and ability to share their knowledge with other members, with minimal supervision. The candidate should understand the reasons for the decisions they make and take into consideration any circumstances where assistance from a professional, such as a veterinarian, farrier or nutritionist, should be sought.</p>	<p>The H-A Certification requires the knowledge, experience, and maturity to evaluate and care for a mount's needs efficiently and in a variety of circumstances. The H-A Certification emphasizes theory and study of practical aspects and requires the candidates to demonstrate the ability to apply and problem-solve by making informed decisions for all aspects of running a barn, teaching, or training horses. It reflects the theory and study, as well as the practical application of horse management that can be expected of a college curriculum.</p>
Presentation	Not applicable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show a mount in hand as if for sale. Mount should be presented with a specific discipline or activity in mind, based on conformation, movement, disposition and breed characteristics. • The mount should be shown with at least 3 braids and in a correctly fitted bridle. The candidate should show control of the mount while at the halt and while working on a triangle to show the mount's quality of movement at the walk and trot. • Discuss the mount's general condition. • Discuss dental features used to determine the mount's approximate age. Include any abnormalities observed and how they might affect the horse. • Evaluate the presented mount's shoeing or trimming. Discuss hoof angles and hoof balance, wear and shape of hoof and possible effect of current shoeing or trimming on horse's movement and long-term soundness. • Discuss common shoes and their function, including the purpose of any additional features (e.g., quarter clips).

<p style="text-align: center;">Tack</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify different types of bridles, nosebands, girths, martingales, breastplates, cruppers, boots, bits, and training aids described in the USPC Manuals. Discuss their use, purpose, and fit. • Discuss 3 areas, or ways you might check to determine if a saddle fit properly. • Discuss how you would determine if a saddle fit the rider properly. • Discuss possible physical and behavioral issues that a horse may develop from being ridden in an ill-fitting saddle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss correct fit, uses and misuses of different types of bits, saddles, girths, martingales, boots, breastplates, and training aids described in the USPC Manuals. • Discussion should include actions and applications for various mounts. Indicate discipline and level for which the equipment is appropriate. • Discuss inspection of saddlery for safety and fit, to determine need for adjustment, repairs and/or padding. Discussion should include examination of saddle on a bare back, examination of saddle with pads, examination of saddle with rider during work and examination of horse's back following work. • Discuss how to make temporary adjustments to ill-fitting tack, such as saddle on withers, cantle too low, leathers too long, bridle too large, reins too long, bit too large or small, and broken tree. Discuss elements of safety when making tack adjustments. • Describe procedures for reclaiming neglected tack including synthetics. Identify indications that tack cannot be safely reclaimed. Discuss methods for long and short term storage of tack.
<p style="text-align: center;">Training/ Longeing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify longeing equipment. Discuss the use, possible dangers or misuse, and adjustment of equipment. • Discuss common methods of attaching the longe line and different techniques used when longeing, such as parallel longeing, spiraling in and out of the circle, body language, placement, etc. • Discuss safety concerns when longeing the unfamiliar mount, to include when it is safe to attach side reins. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss and demonstrate proper fit and use of equipment, to include side reins or other training equipment described in the USPC Manuals. • Candidates will be provided with a longeing scenario and will discuss how they might handle the situation. Discussion should include training techniques or exercises that address the specific issue. • Discuss the potential for injury of the horse while longeing. • Discuss safety precautions to be considered when longeing a rider. • Discuss and demonstrate proper fit and use of equipment, to include side reins or other training equipment described in the USPC Manuals. • Longe assigned mount using safe, correct, and effective longeing techniques (as outlined in the USPC Manuals) while working toward establishing a 20-meter circle. • After a brief warm-up/evaluation period, discuss the presented horse's level of training and develop a suitable plan to improve the horse. Discussion to include elements of the Training Scale, as well as tempo, balance, and ability to "track up" while showing an appreciation for the horse's safety and comfort. • Discuss and demonstrate suitable exercises that are appropriate for this horse. • Evaluate and discuss performance of exercises used and offer suggestions in order to continue mount's training through longeing.

<p>Bandaging</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>	<p>Candidates will be given bandaging scenarios and will discuss and demonstrate the application of 2 selected specialty bandages using appropriate materials, such as: sheet cotton, flannel, track bandages, ACE bandages, conforming gauze, quilt batting, quilts, diaper, towels, etc. Discuss values and potential dangers when any of the above materials are used.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application 1: Based on a scenario provided by the Examiner, using the knee or hock joint, apply a spider, figure-eight bandage, or a stack bandage. • Application 2: Based on a scenario provided by the Examiner, apply a bandage from the following selection: shipping, sweat, poultice, pressure, hoof abscess, heel grab, cold water, or ice.
<p>Foot and Shoeing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the principal outer and inner structures of the foot and describe their function. • Using the appropriate farrier tools, imitate how to remove a shoe. • Identify common types of shoes, pads, and materials they are made of, widths and common features. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the presented horse's shoeing or trimming. Discuss hoof angles and hoof balance, wear and shape of hoof and possible effect of current shoeing or trimming on horse's movement and long-term soundness. • Be prepared to discuss common shoes and their function, including the purpose of any additional features (e.g., quarter clips). Done in presentation.
<p>Anatomy, Conformation and Lameness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the provided mount, identify the anatomy of the front and hind leg from the scapula and pelvis down, to include: principal bones, tendons, and ligaments. • Candidates will draw cards to answer the following questions regarding the provided mount: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Evaluate the overall balance. ➢ Relate basic conformation to movement in terms of interfering, over- reaching, forging, brushing, paddling, and winging. ➢ Identify and discuss any unsoundnesses or cosmetic defects (blemishes), including common causes, specific locations, and inner structures involved. ➢ Identify and discuss conformation faults and how they may affect a mount's long-term soundness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidates may be asked to compare and discuss the conformation of up to 3 mount(s), in addition to the assigned mount used during the presentation phase. Discussion may include suitability of mount(s) for a specific activity, any faults, and how these might effect movement and possibly contribute to unsoundness. • Discuss the functional anatomy of the legs to include the joints, insertions of major tendons and ligaments. • Discuss the basic biomechanics of movement and self-carriage (Circle of Muscles). • Observe a mount in motion to assess its athletic ability and suitability for a specific discipline. Discussion should include the effect of conformation faults on movement and any obvious unsoundness.
<p>Health and Maintenance Record Book</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a hard copy of mount's Health and Maintenance Record Book that contains at least 1 year of records prior to test. • In addition to the information from the previous levels, records must contain more detailed information regarding your mount's specific care to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Diagram of the stable and turnout areas. ➢ Location of: horse's stall and turnout; important paper or other information critical to horse's care; first aid kits and emergency equipment. 	<p>Not applicable.</p>
<p>Stable Management (H-B) Stable/Farm Design and Management Plan (H-A)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify 5 safety practices/precautions in this facility. • Describe procedure for morning and evening inspection of horses for health and safety in stable and in pasture. • Discuss preventative measures that may decrease the spread of disease for stabled and pastured mounts. • Identify 2-3 randomly chosen plants from the bank of 10-12 examples/pictures of toxic plants selected for the test. (A bank of plant names and information will be provided prior to the test). • List 3 signs, specific to this plant, that you might see in a horse who consumed or has come into contact with the 	<p>Candidates will design, present and be prepared to discuss a detailed outline of a hypothetical facility and horse management plan for the care of 5-10 horses within a safe and efficient system based on geographical best management practices. At the beginning of a certification, candidates will present to the Examiners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the type of facility. • A drawing of the entire facility including barn, turnout areas, riding/ training areas, driveways, walkways, and gates. • A floor plan of the barn showing location and size of

	<p>plant.</p>	<p>stalls, aisles, feed/hay/bedding storage, tack room, grooming area, windows, doors, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A detailed floor plan with dimensions of a stall, the tack room and feed area. • A description of the materials chosen for construction of structures, flooring for all areas, fencing, footing for riding/ training areas, doors, and gates. • A sample schedule of daily facility care routine. • Parasite management philosophy/routine/schedule. • Pasture management routine/schedule for facility and land conservation methods. • Pictures, descriptions and poisoning symptoms for at least 5 poisonous plants in the member's area. • Manure management plan for the facility. • A yearly inoculation and dental schedule for the facility. • Yearly schedule for farrier care. • An emergency plan for the facility with planning for potential crisis of both a general and a geographic nature. • Seasonal differences or adjustments for above plans/ schedule.
Travel Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the following preparations of a mount for safe, comfortable travel for short and long distances: weather, a plan for and during periodic rest stops, nutritional considerations, bandaging options, blanketing, and other equipment that may be utilized. • Discuss preparation and checklist for vehicle and trailer safety described in the USPC H-B—A Manual and the USPC Safety Handbook. 	<p>Not applicable.</p>
Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss feeding principles and their effect on the mount's digestive system and overall health. • Discuss why the 6 classes of nutrients are needed by mount, and primary sources. Include in discussion water-soluble and fat-soluble vitamins and the calcium/phosphorus ratio. • Identify and evaluate samples of hay, grain, and bedding for suitability and safety. • Know availability, cost, and origin of your own feed. • List supplements given to their own mount and reasons for their use. • Discuss seasonal variations of feeding mounts. • Look at a feed label and identify the primary sources of protein, carbohydrates, and fat. (Candidate should bring own label or copy.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate ability to purchase feed responsibly by discussing the characteristics, advantages, and disadvantages of different types of roughage and concentrates as described in the USPC Manuals. • Interpret the nutritional value of feed available from label information. • Discuss a complete nutritional program for various types of horses (e.g., aged, growing, breeding, lactating, working, idle, laid up, and special health conditions) that includes consideration and common sources of protein, fat, fiber, carbohydrates, minerals, vitamins, and electrolytes. • Discuss the nutritional management of health conditions: Equine Cushing's Disease, Equine Metabolic Syndrome, and Insulin Resistance. • Discuss safe storage methods for different varieties and quantities of feed. • Discuss criteria used to determine whether or not feed supplements or nutraceuticals are needed. Discuss benefits and dangers of use.
Conditioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the following conditioning principles: base of fitness, progressive loading, peaking, tapering, rest, overloading, inversion, recovery rate, anhidrosis, and dehydration. • Discuss the different types of conditioning (e.g., long slow distance, interval training, building flexibility and strength, cross training, aerobic exercise, and anaerobic exercise.) and their intended effect on conditioning. 	<p>The candidate should demonstrate an understanding of exercise physiology and conditioning principles through an in-depth discussion of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • types of conditioning and their effect on the horse (musculoskeletal, cardiovascular, and respiratory systems) • strength versus endurance • aerobic and anaerobic (both alactic & lactic) metabolism • anaerobic threshold

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain how Temperature, Pulse, and Respiration (TPR) are used when conditioning the horse. Discussion should include normal ranges of TPR during strenuous work, the effect of increasing intensity of exercise on TPR, the effect of improved fitness on recovery rates, the benefits of using a heart rate monitor verses taking it manually, factors that might affect respiration rate and body temperature making them a less accurate indicator of fitness. • Discuss thermoregulation, and any problems that might arise when conditioning in hot, humid weather or a heat index above 100. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conditioning for different activities • how gaits affect respiration • environmental factors to consider when conditioning
Land Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a letter from the DC/CA certifying the candidate's involvement in a local, regional, or national equine land conservation issue or project. • Include 1-2 page(s), written description (may include photographs) of the project. The candidate will discuss the project or conservation issue with the Examiners. • Discussion may include: why your activity should be considered land conservation, who benefits from it, what you learned, and how you could share the importance of what you learned. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the relationship between land conservation concerns and initiatives and equine sports and horse management, venues and facilities. Discussion may include current and future challenges from the local area to the global environment. • Describe appropriate methods to include land conservation awareness into an unmounted curriculum. Discuss the impact that land conservation may have on the barn plan presented. Discussion should include how the following might impact their plan: local regulations on manure management, changes in local open space and equine use areas, and other local or federal land conservation issues.
Health Care and Veterinary Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and discuss the dental characteristics of a mount (age of mount will be provided). Discuss the eruption of the teeth, and how baby teeth are replaced by permanent teeth; locate and name the incisors; locate the cheek teeth. Know the number of teeth (male and female), and discuss special problems such as overshot or undershot jaw and cribbing. • Discuss in depth your annual immunization and parasite prevention schedules for your horse. • Discuss the simple life cycle and damage caused by the following internal parasites; bots, ascarids, small and large strongyles, pinworms and tapeworms. • Discuss the use of fecal testing and how it may influence a parasite prevention program. • Know what signs might indicate a mount in distress, requiring emergency veterinary attention (eye injuries, severe bleeding, colic, etc.). Explain the care you would give before a veterinarian arrives. • Discuss causes, signs, preventative measures, and supportive care of mount for the following: Equine Asthma (heaves), encephalomyelitis, influenza, strangles, equine infectious anemia, rhinopneumonitis, rhabdomyolysis, corneal ulcer, recurrent uveitis, and rain rot. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on a provided scenario discuss the following disorders/diseases to include anatomical system involved, causative agent, signs, and immediate care: PPID (Cushings), insulin resistance/metabolic syndrome, herpes myeloencephalopathy, botulism, Lyme disease, anaplasmosis, ringworm, sarcoid, summer sores, gastric ulcer, Equine viral arteritis, Potomac horse fever, EPM (Equine Protozoal Myeloencephalitis), tooth problems, and roaring. • Describe the basic functions of the following systems: respiratory, urinary, circulatory/lymphatic, nervous, digestive, reproductive, integumentary, skeletal, and major muscle groups involved with locomotion. • Discuss predisposing factors, including symptoms and care of mount for the following: fever, tying up, inflammation, edema, arthritis, shock, and dehydration. • Discuss diseases associated with travel and exposure to strange mounts.
Health Care and Veterinary Knowledge (Special Care)	Not applicable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss possible indications for use of the following drug classes that might be prescribed by a veterinarian (NSAIDS, sedatives/pain relievers, corticosteroids, gastric ulcer treatments, osteoarthritis treatments). • Understand the possible basic complications that can result from their use and where to find which drugs are allowed in horses competing under USEF and USPC rules.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss administration and storage of each drug. • Discuss any management concerns that need to be addressed for a horse on those drug classes. • Discuss specific precautions when shipping, feeding and restraining a sedated mount. • Discuss twitches-benefits, dangers and different types. • Describe other methods of physical restraint, from mild to aggressive.
Teaching (Technique)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidates must bring a letter from DC/CA stating that he/she is assisting in simple mounted lessons at the D to C-1 level with supervision. A minimum of 6 hours teaching prior to the test is recommended. • Present one lesson plan for a 45 minute to 1 hour mounted lesson (e.g., flat exercises, gridwork, coursework, Western, etc.) up to the C-1 Standard. • Discuss how to perform a safety check and other safety considerations of teaching. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know teaching techniques included in USPC Manual of Horsemanship, Vol. III and be able to demonstrate knowledge of those skills as acquired through teaching experience. • Discuss ways to handle the following lesson situations: mixed age or skill group, effective use of assistant, interfering coach or parent, unsuitable and/or unsound mount, runaway mount, disobedient mount, fall of rider, arguing student, uninterested student, fearful student, unfit condition of mount or student, change in weather or environment prior to or during a lesson, and any problems beyond a teacher's ability or training to solve. • Discuss how to recognize and to adapt teaching technique(s) for students who might have physical challenges or different learning styles. • Demonstrate knowledge of requirements in D, C, and B Standards of Proficiency. • Discuss skills that would be covered in teaching a C Pony Club member to safely and effectively longe a mount.
Teaching (H-B, a Class) Teaching (H-A, the Lesson)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring all teaching material to the unmounted lesson. Horses are not permitted. For barn lessons, proper footwear is required. All students must wear USPC or USEA medical armbands or bracelets. • Present written lesson plan for a 10 minute, unmounted lesson for D1-D3 members (may contain elements of the C1 standard). The written plan and actual lesson taught should include: objective, explanation, procedure steps to include demonstration, hands-on activity, questions asked, and conclude with summary objective and a home activity. • Teach the unmounted lesson to a group of D-1 to D-3 Pony Club members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All candidates should be in riding attire including proper footwear. All candidates and students must wear USPC or USEA approved medical armbands or bracelets. • Prepare a lesson plan for assigned lesson. Lesson topics and levels will be assigned by Examiners. • Demonstrate teaching a safe, informative 20-minute lesson to a group of 3-5 riders (D-1 to B or adult volunteers). Each lesson must demonstrate the candidate's ability to teach a key concept, movement or skill that is a level or two above the current riding ability of the students in the group, as appropriate on the USPC Standards of Proficiency. Emphasis should be placed on the correctness of the figure or skill, the explanations of correct aids and their uses, the riders' basic balanced position, and the candidate's ability to make appropriate corrections and improvements in the performance of the riders and/or mounts. • For safety the candidate should bring: a cell phone, local emergency number(s) in addition to 911, and teaching location's address. • Candidates should bring their instructor's "tool kit". A list of suggested items can be found in the Teaching supplement to the H-B—H-A Level Manual on the USPC H-HM/H/H-A Certification web page. • Evaluate the lesson plan and discuss achievement of the teaching objective, improvement of the lesson, and changes, if any, to the plan for safety considerations. • Discuss one student's riding position and suggest 3 longeing exercises to address specific positional challenges.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss and/or demonstrate appropriate safety considerations when setting up a jumping lesson, including use and spacing of cavaletti/trotting poles and distance between fences in a grid or jumping line. <p><i>Note: Dressage and Western Track candidates, should discuss and/or demonstrate appropriate safety considerations and distances when setting up cavaletti/trotting poles.</i></p>
Rider Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name 2-3 heat related illnesses or conditions and explain how they differ from each other. • Describe the steps you should take if someone you are riding with falls off a horse. • Discuss several symptoms of concussion and the immediate care of a rider with suspected concussion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on a scenario provided by Examiner, discuss instructor emergency preparedness and risk management suitable for the given situation. • Discuss the detailed procedure involved in determining if a rider should continue riding.

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