

USPC C-Level Western COMPARISON Flow Chart

(for Standards Revised 2024)

*No Western National certifications available at this time.

	C-1	C-2
Horse Management Expectations	The candidate should show a developing awareness of cause and effect in the care of their mount. He/she should be familiar with local common horse terms. Assistance is recommended in the demonstration of bandaging.	The candidates should show a solid awareness of cause and effect in horse management skills. Assistance is allowed in some demonstrations of bandaging and longeing.
Presentation/Turnout and Tack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidates mount and tack to reflect the <i>Horse Management Handbook's</i> Turnout expectations. • Show shirts, or neat, Western-style shirts, with long sleeves, and collar, as well as “slinky” shirts and vests are appropriate attire for certifications. Neatly pressed jeans or slacks, worn with a belt. Pants must cover boot tops. Pony Club pin, USPC or USEA medical armband or bracelet; and a properly fitted equestrian helmet securely fastened (see USPC Policy 0810). Properly fitted chaps may be worn. Spurs, if used, can be no longer than 3”. Rowel to be blunt and may not exceed 1”. • Mount to be well-groomed, reflecting regular care with a healthy coat: no sweat or dirt. Mane and tail brushed with little, if any, dandruff. External areas around sheath/udder clean. Hooves picked out and reflecting regular farrier care. Eyes, nose, lips, and dock clean. • Tack to be safe, clean, and properly adjusted, reflecting regular care/conditioning with metal polished. No jockeys or dust and all stress points clean. • Identify tack on own mount and discuss fit/ • Describe 3 different snaffle bits. • Describe how to adjust a curb chain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidates mount and tack to reflect the <i>Horse Management Handbook's</i> Turnout expectations. • Show shirts, or neat, Western-style shirts, with long sleeves, and collar, as well as “slinky” shirts and vests are appropriate attire for certifications. Neatly pressed jeans or slacks, worn with a belt. Pants must cover boot tops. Pony Club pin, USPC or USEA medical armband or bracelet; and a properly fitted equestrian helmet securely fastened (see USPC Policy 0810). Properly fitted chaps may be worn. Spurs, if used, can be no longer than 3”. Rowel to be blunt and may not exceed 1”. • Mount to be thoroughly well-groomed, reflecting regular care with a healthy coat: no sweat or dirt. Mane and tail brushed with little, if any, dandruff. Sheath/udder showing regular attention. Feet picked out and reflecting regular farrier care. Eyes, nose, lips, and dock clean. • All tack to be safe, clean, and properly adjusted, reflecting regular care/conditioning with metal polished. No jockeys or dust and all stress points clean. • Identify and explain reasons for tack on own mount and discuss adjustments and reasons for fit of tack. <p>Explain the action of 2 types of snaffle bits.</p>
Leading/Longeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss 3 reasons for longeing. • Name 4 required items the rider must have when longeing and 3 items used for a mount at the C level as described in the <i>USPC C Manual</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the fit of the longeing equipment being used on the mount. • Discuss the type and length of the longe line used. • Name 3 safety precautions when longeing.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe parallel longeing and explain why it might be used. • Demonstrate parallel leading (from both sides at the walk only) with assistance, if necessary, as described in the <i>USPC C Manual</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In an enclosed area, longe familiar mount at walk and trot in both directions on a 20-meter circle, with assistance, if necessary. While longeing, demonstrate the correct use of equipment, body position, posture, and voice. • Discuss technique used (parallel or pivot) in longeing demonstration.
Bandaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name 2 possible effects of poor bandaging techniques. • Apply 2 stable (aka standing) bandages (front a rear diagonal pair), with assistance, if needed, from the Examiner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under direct supervision, apply 1 stable bandage without assistance. Discuss why you would make the choose to use a cupping technique. • Apply a tail bandage (for shipping or grooming) with assistance.
Foot and Shoeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss causes of thrush and prevention. • Identify 6 farrier tools and their uses. • Identify 3 types of shoes. • Describe 3 examples of bad shoeing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the 5 steps in shoeing. • Describe 2-3 types of common shoe features and why they might be used (e.g., clips, square toe, pads, studs). • If shod, discuss features of own mount's shoes.
Conformation and Unsoundness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and discuss 3 bad points of basic leg conformation. • Describe the outward appearance, and locate these 5 common unsoundnesses: splint, bowed tendon, bone spavin, curb, and ringbone. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss how conformation of own mount is related to its breed. • Discuss angles of shoulder and hip of own mount. • Name 5 basic conformation qualities that you want in a mount of your own use, and how they affect the basic movement and soundness. • Describe appearance, and specific location of the following unsoundnesses: splint, bowed tendon, ringbone, navicular, thoroughpin, curb, bone and bog spavin.
<p>Health and Maintenance Record Book</p> <p><i>Purpose: to supply an accurate and detailed outline of a member's (or borrowed or virtual) mount's basic health and care information in order for someone else to properly care for mount if member was laid up or called away for a prolonged period.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a hard copy (in a folder/binder or stapled) of mount's Health and Maintenance Record Book that contains records for at least 6 months prior to the test. • In addition to the information from the previous levels (D-2 & D-3), records must contain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ D-2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Horse information and photo * Contact information for veterinarian and farrier * Feeding information and schedule ○ D-3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Dated list of routine care (vaccinations, deworming, shoeing, and dentistry) * Daily schedule of care, which may include grooming, riding, feeding, etc. ○ C-1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Weekly riding/conditioning schedule and changes to this schedule (seasonal or other) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a hard copy (in a folder/binder) of mount's Health and Maintenance Record Book that contains records for at least 9 months prior to the test. In addition to the information from the previous levels, records must contain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ D-2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Horse information and photo * Contact information for veterinarian and farrier * Feeding information and schedule ○ D-3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Dated list of routine care (vaccinations, deworming, shoeing, and dentistry) * Daily schedule of care, which may include grooming, riding, feeding, etc. ○ C-1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Weekly riding/conditioning schedule and changes to this schedule (seasonal or other) * Activities (beyond daily routine, e.g., lessons, clinics, competitions, etc.)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Activities (beyond daily routine, e.g., lessons, clinics, competitions, etc.) * Extra veterinary visits (beyond routine care) * Expenses (income can be added, but not required) <p><i>Template may be USPC design or own design that contains the same data.</i></p>	<p>○ C-2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * 1 page or less description of your mount's history (if known) and daily routine * Tack and equipment used * Any blanketing or special care requirements <p><i>Template may be USPC design or own design that contains the same data.</i></p>
Stable Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss 1 drainage and 1 absorbent bedding. • Describe 3 areas that are important to check for a sheet or blanket to fit correctly. Name 2 safety concerns when putting on a blanket or removing a blanket. • Discuss 5 general barn safety practices. • Describe and give reasons for 3 types of clipping. • Name 2 internal and 2 external parasites. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss 3 concerns for pasture safety and fencing. • Discuss emergency information that should be posted in all barns. • Name 3 toxic plants in your area and describe 1 aspect of each plant that would help you recognize it in the pasture (e.g., type of plant, flower, color, height, etc.). • Describe 3 ways to manage internal and/or external parasites in pastures and stalls.
Travel Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe basic equipment or care needed for mount's safety and comfort during trailer travel. • Discuss 5 items from the truck/trailer safety checklist that you should check before you travel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain 5 ways to keep your mount safe and comfortable during travel. <p>Name which equine health certificates and/or documents are required to travel in your state.</p>
Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss how much water an average horse drinks in a day and 2 reasons why water is important for horses. • Describe 2 characteristics of bad hay and explain why access to good-quality roughage is important. • Name one legume hay and one grass hay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe own mount's ration when developing fitness, maintaining fitness, taking day off, sick, and extended time off. • List the 6 classes of nutrients. • Look at a feed label and identify the percentage of protein and fat. From the ingredients list, identify 1 source of each protein, carbohydrates, fat, vitamin, and mineral. (Candidate should bring own label or copy.) <p><i>*See supplements to the C-Level Manual on the C-Level Certification web page.</i></p>
Conditioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the meaning of conditioning and the reasons for conditioning a mount. • Describe 3 factors to consider before a horse can begin a conditioning program. • Discuss 2 types of conditioning work, such as long, slow distance hill work and how this helps improve your mount's fitness. • Name 2 indicators (evidence) of improved fitness for your mount. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the weekly riding plan in your record book. Candidate should show and be able to discuss details of duration, activity, and general exercise involved. • Discuss how you would condition your mount from unfit to C-1 level riding fitness that includes changes in feed, TPR, and recovery rates. • Name 2 ways to help cool down your mount in very hot conditions. • Name 2 things to be aware of when exercising your horse in cold weather (e.g., footing conditions, shoes, clipped horse). • Measure and record pulse, temperature, and respiration of own mount at rest with

		examiner present, and with assistance, if needed.
Land Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name 2 different locations near you where the land is used for horseback riding and other outdoor activities such as hiking and sports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss what public land is available to ride on in your county. Describe 2 things you can do to be a good steward for public land used for recreation (equestrian activities, hiking, biking, etc.).
Health Care and Veterinary Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how to treat minor wounds. Discuss parasite management for your mount. Name 3 things you can do to prevent your horse from contracting a communicable disease (i.e., while riding at other facilities or keeping mount at show grounds). Discuss 3 health concerns before bringing a new horse into a barn or stable. Explain the reason for having a Coggins test done. Discuss causes, signs, and preventative measures for the following: colic, laminitis, and choke. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss immunizations and health requirements appropriate for your area (may refer to record book). List 3 prevalent internal parasites in your area. Discuss causes, signs, and preventative measures for the following: tetanus, rabies, encephalomyelitis, West Nile virus, and scratches. Explain the need for the regular care of mount's teeth. Describe location of the parts of the horse's mouth to include bars, lips, incisors, molars, wolf teeth, and canines.
Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring a letter from DC/CA verifying the member assisted twice at an unmounted Pony Club activity. Demonstrate a safety and tack inspection for a D member (explaining any safety issues found) to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rider attire (helmet, boots, and medical armband or bracelet). Bit is right way up and is attached to bridle correctly. Curb chain adjusted correctly, if using. Crownpiece/Headstall and Browband fitted. Reins attached correctly. Billets, stirrup leather, and reins in good repair. Girth is good size for mount and in good condition. Saddle fits mount and rider, and pad is correctly attached. Ponies' feet picked out. <p><i>Refer to the USPC C Manual</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring a letter from DC/CA stating, under supervision, the member is assisting in simple unmounted instructional activities for D-level members. A minimum of 4 hours teaching prior to the test is recommended. Under direct supervision by the Examiner, teach a D member how to safely prepare their mount for turnout at a rally or certification (not to exceed 10 minutes). Discuss with the Examiner how you might handle a tack or equipment check where there is a safety concern. Describe the following unsafe equipment and how it might be fixed: loose throat latch, saddle pad not attached, bit too low/high, worn-out stitching, and cracked leather. <i>(At C level, changes to tack should only be made by a parent or supervising adult.)</i>
Rider Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List 3 ways to determine if a riding helmet fits properly. Describe 3 signs of heat illness. <p><i>Refer to the USPC Safety Handbook.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List 3 signs of a concussion. Explain 2 ways to cool off a rider during a hot day. Explain the importance of the heat index. <p><i>Refer to the USPC Safety Handbook.</i></p>
Riding Expectations	Candidate should ride with confidence and control on the flat and over obstacles and patterns and use of natural aids. The candidate should begin riding mount freely forward in balance and rhythm while developing a light	Candidate should ride with confidence and control on the flat and over obstacles and patterns, demonstrating a secure western balanced position and progress toward an independent seat and coordinated use of aids.

	<p>contact appropriate to bit and an independent seat. These expectations are applied to each block of the test.</p>	<p>The candidate should be to initiate free forward movement, establishing balance and rhythm while developing a light contact appropriate to bit. These expectations are applied to each block of the test.</p>
Riding on the Flat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ride test consistently demonstrating Riding Expectations. • Demonstrate suppling exercises for rider without stirrups at walk. • Demonstrate mount's warm-up routine for everyday work. • Discuss candidate's warm-up for both rider and mount with Examiner. • Work mount at walk, jog, and lope, with smooth transitions, demonstrating correct bend, performing straight lines on centerline, and quarter lines. Rider 20-meter and 15-meter circles and figure eights with simple changes through the jog at each gait. • Demonstrate long, loose and light contact at walk. • Back 2-3 steps. • Discuss aids for and then demonstrate 180 pivot both directions. • Discuss performance with Examiner on the following; the rider's basic western balanced position, whether or not mount was moving freely forward in balance and rhythm, and whether rider established a light contact (appropriate to bit) and use of natural aids. • Ride at the lope in both directions in an enclosed area and be aware of leads. • Discuss performance with Examiner, indicating whether or not mount was on correct lead. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the meaning of the Riding Expectations. Ride consistently demonstrating riding test expectations. • Demonstrate warm-up for flat work including rider exercises. • Discuss candidate's warm-up for rider and mount. • Discuss warm-up schedule for three different activities of candidate's choice. • Work mount at walk, jog, lope, changing directions at least once in each gait, using coordinated aids, maintaining even rhythm, balance and impulsion and smooth transitions. • Demonstrate 20-meter and 15-meter circles, figure eights, serpentines and work on the center or quarter lines to develop suppleness and straightness, • Demonstrate walk to extended walk, jog to extended jog. • Stop squarely and stand quietly for five seconds. • Ride mount without stirrups at all gaits. • Discuss aids for and demonstrate a rein-back of 2-3 steps. • Discuss aids for and then demonstrate leg yield at walk. • Develop a hand gallop from a lope and return to lope smoothly. • Perform a 360 pivot in both directions. • Discuss performance with examiner including the rider's position, and whether mount was moving forward in balance and rhythm.
Riding Obstacles and Patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ride through obstacles and patterns as per Riding Expectations. • Ride over small gymnastic grid of poles set at appropriate length for mount. Demonstrate proper hand position for mount over poles. • Complete an obstacle course of six to ten obstacles, to include poles (walk and jog over), halt, walk, jog, lope, back with a change of direction, turn, side-passing, a single-hand maneuver (such as a gate or pick-up), and navigation around cones or upright poles. • Complete a simple pattern. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss reasons for adjusting stirrups and rein length for different types of work. • Develop a plan of how to ride an obstacle course. • Ride course according to plan. • Discuss performance with Examiner, including whether control was maintained through the course. • Rider should demonstrate secure Western basic balanced position over obstacles, showing control and use of aids. • Develop plan to ride a pattern.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss performance with Examiner, including steadiness of pace and ways ride could be improved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss performance with Examiner, including whether control was maintained throughout the pattern.
Riding in the Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ride with control in a group, on a suitable mount, at the walk, jog, and lope. • Discuss and demonstrate riding safely over varied terrain, incorporating as many of the following elements as local conditions allow: hills, small/shallow ditches, flat open areas, and shallow streams as available. • Discuss performance with Examiner giving reasons for any disobedience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ride in a group at the walk, jog, and lope on a suitable mount. • Demonstrate riding safely over varied terrain, as conditions allow. Discuss safety measures when riding over varied footing, i.e., water, mud, rocks, ice, bog, hard ground, sand, pavement. • Ride over five to seven obstacles. • Discuss performance with Examiner, including any reasons for any disobediences.



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