

Saddlery Inspections

- United States Equestrian Federation
- Dressage Rules 121 and 126.11



Saddlery Inspections

- Ring stewards appointed by competition management must check saddlery and inspect bits and spurs on both sides of the horse for at least one-third of the horses in each class.
- Inspection of saddlery and bits must be done at the direction of the technical delegate.



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- Management must provide (preferably latex free) disposable protective gloves. The rider should see the inspector put on a fresh glove. Inspection is done immediately after the performance ride.
- Ask the TD to make copies of legal bits and equipment if they are not provided for you.



Saddlery Inspections

- The checking of the bit and bridle must be done with the greatest caution, as some horses are very touchy and sensitive about their mouths. The inspector should be “horse-friendly”.



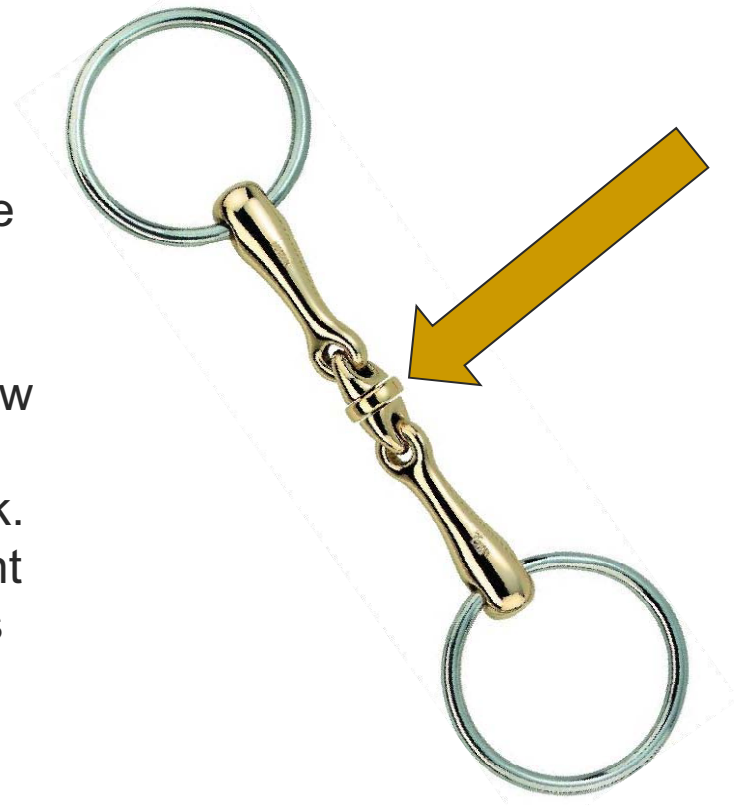
Saddlery Inspections

- Bits must be made of metal or rigid plastic and may be covered with rubber (in manufactured state).
- The bit may not be modified by adding latex or other material. A flexible rubber snaffle is only permitted as a snaffle.



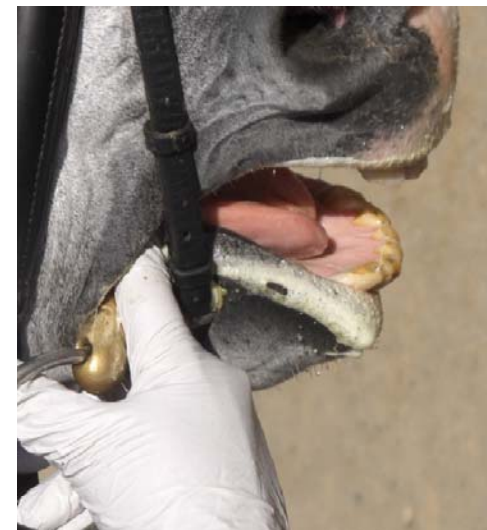
Saddlery Inspections

- There are some bits and equipment only allowed in High Performance Competition that are not allowed in regular national classes.
- Ask the technical delegate to show you the High Performance equipment shown in the rule book. As an example, the bit on the right is OK in High Performance, but is illegal in regular national competition because it has a rotating middle piece.



Saddlery Inspections

- The bit inspection should be done quickly in order not to disturb the horse.
- You can loosen the drop or flash noseband, allowing the horse to open the mouth - it's easier to see the bit.



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- When inspecting the bit, pay attention to the corners of the horse's mouth.
- Pink, fresh bruising is cause to call the technical delegate and hold the horse.



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- The diameter of the bridoon or mouthpiece must be at 10mm at rings or cheeks of the mouthpiece (except for ponies when the diameter can be less).
- The diameter of the curb must be a minimum of 12mm, and the snaffle used in Young Horse classes minimum of 14mm.



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- After checking one side of the bit, check the other side of the bit. Then move to the spur and the area of skin next to the spur.
- Run your glove over the skin around the spur area. If there is any blood and/or fresh pink bruising, immediately call the technical delegate. The horse should be held.



Saddlery Inspections

Rule Proposal DR121.6:
a cavesson noseband
may never be so tightly
fixed that it causes
irritation to the skin, *and
must be adjusted to
allow at least two fingers
under the noseband on
the side of the face
under the cheekbone.*



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- Spurs must be metal. The shank must point down or out from the center of the spur). Swan necked spurs are legal.
- The inside arm of the spur must be smooth. One or both arms may have rubber covers. Metal spurs with hard round plastic knobs on the shank are allowed as are “dummy” spurs that do not have a shank.



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- If rowels are used, they must be blunt/smooth and free to rotate. The pair on the boot are smooth/blunt, the long spikes are not.
- Check both boots. If the rider has dismounted, they still must be checked.



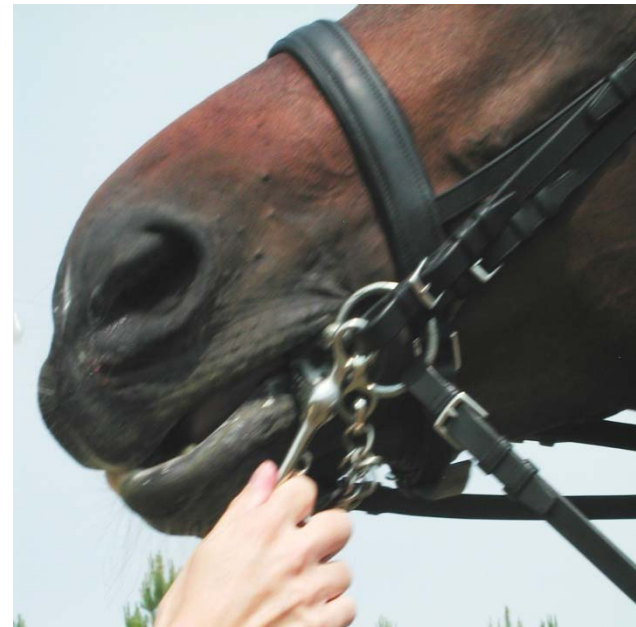
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- English-style stirrups, without attachments, or safety stirrups are compulsory.
- Once one side of the horse has been checked, move around to the other side and repeat the inspection.



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- If the horse is excited, and resisting the bit check, you should not let the horse go unchecked.
- Another steward or technical delegate should follow the horse back to the stable and check the equipment and the horse.



Saddlery Inspections

- The technical delegate may ask you to check every horse, especially if it is a Selection Class, or Junior/Young Rider or Young Horse Qualifier.
- Make sure you have plenty of gloves, and that the technical delegate is on radio and easy to reach.

