

COMPENSATING (ADAPTIVE) AIDS

Compensating (adaptive) aids are used by riders to compensate for the physical or sensory limitation resulting from their impairment, thereby enabling them to ride a horse. For example, a hand hold on the front of the saddle enables someone with a high level spinal cord injury to balance on the horse.

A compensating (adaptive) aid is not to be used to compensate for lack of riding skill or provide an advantage to the rider as an aid to enhance the horse's performance – this would be considered a training aid. The well-being of the horse is paramount in considering the use of any compensating aid.

Please note that at Equine Canada Bronze Level competitions, all Para-Equestrian Dressage (PEC and/or FEI) tests and Para-Equestrian Canada Video Competition classes may be commanded. At Equine Canada Silver and Gold level competitions, all PEC Para-Equestrian Dressage tests may be commanded, but FEI Para-Equestrian Dressage tests may only be commanded if a commander is listed as an approved compensating aid on the athlete's Classification Card. Only those Athletes with intellectual impairment, visual impairment (B1) or following head injury leading to short term memory loss, may have a commander to read their tests as a compensating aid.

Athletes with an intellectual impairment are not eligible for classification under the current FEI rules, if no other physical or visual impairment exists, but are permitted to compete in any class in the Para-Equestrian Canada Video Competition Series.

Please refer to the Rules of Equine Canada, Section M, for the correct use of aids in competition – Rules of Equine Canada

Classification

Only accredited Equine Canada National and Fédération Équestre Internationale (FEI) Classifiers can assess and assign a 'Classification Grade' to an athlete. According to Section M under the Rules of Equine Canada, only riders wishing to compete at Equine Canada Silver and Gold level must hold a Para-Equestrian Athlete Classification Card. Riders wishing to compete at Equine Canada Bronze level must use the Equine Canada Para-Equestrian Medical Form.

Please visit our website to download the Medical Form and for more information about classification - https://www.equestrian.ca/sport/para-equestrian

Examples of compensating aids used in Para-Equestrian Sport

The following tables are provided for reference purposes to assist athletes and coaches in determining the type of aids that will help compensate for the rider's physical or sensory limitation(s).

- Table 1: Examples of compensating aids used in Para-Equestrian Dressage
- Table 2: Examples of compensating aids used in Para-Equestrian Driving
- Table 3: Examples of compensating aids used in Para-Equestrian Canada Video Competition Coast-to-Coast Combined Jumping classes

CLASSIFICATION	COMPENSATING AIDS		
GRADE 1a Mainly wheelchair users with impairment of all 4 limbs, may be able to walk with an unsteady gait, however trunk and balance are severely impaired.	 Hand holds or neck strap Strap from stirrup leather or stirrup to girth Looped reins Raised pommel and/ or cantle away from the body Enclosed stirrups Connecting rein bar 	 Rubber bands to stirrup Salute with head only 1 or 2 whips Use of voice Seat saver No stirrups May ride with only one hand 	
GRADE 1b Mainly wheelchair users with poor trunk balance and or impairment of function in all four limbs, or no trunk balance and good upper limb function, or moderate trunk balance with severe impairment of all 4 limbs.	 Hand holds or neck strap Strap from stirrup leather or stirrup to girth Looped reins Raised pommel and/ or cantle away from the body Enclosed stirrups Connecting rein bar Rubber bands to stirrup 	 Salute with head only 1 or 2 whips Use of voice Seat saver No stirrups Stirrups May ride with only one hand 	
Mainly wheelchair users or those with severe movement and mobility Impairment involving the trunk and with good to mild limb function, those with severe arm Impairment and slight leg Impairment of severe unilateral Impairment.	 Hand holds Strap from stirrup leather or stirrup to girth May need looped reins Raised pommel and/ or cantle away from the body Enclosed stirrups Connecting rein bar Rubber bands to stirrup 	 Salute with head only 1 or 2 whips Use of voice Seat saver One or No stirrups Stirrups May ride with one hand only 	
GRADE III Usually able to walk without support. Moderate unilateral Impairment or moderate Impairment in four limbs or severe arm Impairment. Athlete may need a wheelchair for longer distances or due to lack of stamina. Total loss of sight in both eyes. Blacked out glasses or blind fold must be worn by totally blind athletes.	 Hand holds Strap from stirrup leather or stirrup to girth Looped reins Profile 36 Athletes must wear a PE approved blindfold, blacked out glasses or blacked out swimming goggles when training at the competition venue and while competing Profile 36 and 39 athletes allowed commanders Rubber bands to stirrup 	 Salute with head only 1- 2 whips Use of voice Seat saver Connecting rein bar Reins through ring attached to saddle Enclosed stirrups One or No stirrups Caller at letters (one inside arena) Commander allowed 	
GRADE IV Athletes usually are impaired in one or two limbs, or have some visual impairment.	 Hand holds Strap from stirrup leather or stirrup to girth Looped reins Enclosed stirrups Connecting rein bar If arms are too short allowed reins through ring attached to saddle 	 Rubber bands to stirrup Salute with head only 1- 2 whips May ride with only one hand One caller to call letters only All visual impaired athletes must wear an arm band to indicate lack of sight during practice and competition 	

Table 2: Examples of compensating aids used in Para-Equestrian Driving (FEI Para-Equestrian Classification Manual, 4 th Edition, January 2015)						
CLASSIFICATION	COMPENSATING AIDS					
GRADE I						
Wheelchair users with poor trunk balance and Impairment in upper limbs, or those who are able to walk but with Impairment of function in all four limbs, or those with severe arm Impairment only.	 Safety harness held by groom Looped or knotted reins Strap on whip No gloves (s) Whip held / used by groom 	All drivers allowed: Safety belt held by groom Safety belt attached with quick release mechanism Handbrake Motor vehicle to walk the course (MVWC)				
GRADE II	Brake operated by groom	 Salute with head only (SWHO) 				

Table 3: Examples of compensating aids used in Para-Equestrian Canada Video Competition Coast-to-Coast Combined Jumping classes #14 to 16 only

Strap on feet or foot trough

CLASS#	COMPENSATING AIDS		
Class #14 – 60cms	Rubber band to stirrups		
	Strap from stirrup to girth		
Class #15 – 75cms	■ 1 or 2 whips no longer than 120 cm		
	Salute with head only		
Class #16 – 90cms	■ Callers		
	■ Commander		
	 Looped reins 		

Important information on other Para-Equestrian Saddlery Aids allowed/not allowed

Athletes must not be held in position by a mechanism that does not automatically release in the event of an accident.

Velcro may be used on the lower limbs to assist the Athlete in the saddle where there is an identified need. The use of Velcro in this way must be listed as a compensating aid. The total amount of Velcro, or similar material, used by any Athlete, must not exceed 50cm². Each overlap contact must not exceed the dimensions of 3cms x 6cms. The total area of Velcro or similar material per leg must not exceed 3cms wide by 5 cms of overlap contact. For safety reason it is recommended that it is fastened in a 'V' shape.

Velcro or similar materials must, in all cases, allow the Athlete to fall free of the Horse.

Those with less Impairment than Grade I, yet are functionally disadvantages against able bodies

drivers.

Breast plates, neck straps, handholds are allowed. Martingales, blinkers, side, balancing, running, bearing and similar reins are forbidden. Any rein adaptation that produces a similar effect to these forbidden reins is not permitted.

The following information is from the Fédération Équestre Internationale (FEI) 'Compensating Aids for FEI Para Equestrian (PE) Competition' document, which provides pictures of allowable compensating aids specifically for FEI competition. The information is being provided as a reference for riders, coaches and officials on how compensating aids may be used in competition.

COMPENSATING AIDS FOR FEI PARA EQUESTRIAN (PE) COMPETITION

"Compensating aids" are used by riders to compensate for the physical or sensory limitation resulting from their impairment, thereby enabling them to ride a horse. For example a hand hold on the front of the saddle enables someone with a high level spinal cord injury to balance on the horse. A compensating aid is not to be used to compensate for lack of riding skill or as an aid to enhance the horse's performance - this would be considered a training aid. The well being of the horse is paramount in considering the use of any compensating aid.

The FEI Para Equestrian Dressage Rules 2008 states:

"Riders with disabilities are allowed to compete in FEI Dressage Competitions using compensating aids according to their FEI PE ID Card, as defined by PE Rules and subject to the approval of the FEI Dressage Committee"

"It is the responsibility of the competitor to ensure that all special equipment/compensating aids are allowed under the FEI PE rules, and that any used are noted on that competitor's FEI PE ID card." (8428.11.0)

The current FEI Para Equestrian Dressage Rules (2008) and FEI Para Equestrian Classification Manual (2008) have been used in the preparation of this document. Riders, coaches and officials should refer to these documents available at the web addresses below.

http://www.fei.org/Disciplines/Para-Equestrian/Rules/Pages/Regulations.aspx

http://www.fei.org/Disciplines/Para-Equestrian/Pages/Classification.aspx

Compensating aids can be divided into two types:-

- · adaptations or modifications to equipment or attire to compensate for
 - loss of function e.g. loop reins for a rider with poor grasp
 - > poor control of limbs e.g. securing stirrup leathers to the girth, or
- aids to assist the rider to compete on an equal basis with other competitors e.g use of callers for riders with a visual impairment or use of whips when there is no active leg control.

The classifiers role in relation to compensating aids is threefold.

- > To assist riders to understand what aids are available to them
- ➤ With the Technical Delegate (TD) and/or Chief Steward (CS) ensure the compensating aids used by a rider are appropriate to their profile and grade.
- Work with officials as requested at competitions to ensure riders are using compensating aids which are appropriate and approved.

Compensating aids can be divided into the following categories.

- Modifications and/or adaptations to:-
 - Saddlery
 - Saddles
 - Bridles/Reins
 - Stirrups
 - Riding attire
 - Riding footwear
 - Gloves

- Other riding equipment
 - Whips
 - o Spurs
- Postural supports and orthoses
 - Straps to control body parts
 - Prostheses
 - Braces

Use of Aids (may require exemption to a particular rule)

- Aids to compensate for sensory loss
 - Commander
 - Caller
- miscellaneous

THE USE OF COMPENSATING AIDS

Riders are encouraged to be as able as possible and to only use compensating aids where necessary. The use of appropriate compensating aids will be discussed with individual riders during the classification process and will be documented on the Para Equestrian Classification card.

It is the responsibility of each competitor to ensure all compensating aids they use in competition have been approved and are documented correctly on their FEI Para Equestrian Identity card (FEI PE ID card). Approval of any compensating aid is dependent on whether the equipment and/or modification to equipment or specific aids are allowed for the riders Profile and Grade, whether it is safe and considers the well being of the horse.

The following applies to the use of compensating aids:-

- Subject to the noted provisions, all saddlery and special equipment permissible shall correspond to that allowed under FEI Dressage Rules.
- The compensating aids are listed on the competitor's FEI PE ID card by the classifier as a result of the competitor's functional profile and discussion with the competitor (and the competitor's trainer if required).
- The use, or non-use, of any aid or adaptation must be indicated on the competitor's FEI PE ID card. If listed, the competitor may use the aid, but is not required to use it. If an aid is not listed, the competitor is not permitted to use that aid.
- Use of any equipment, or exemption, that is not covered in the rules must be supported by medical documentation and approved by the Head Classifier.
- All competitors are responsible to have their FEI PE ID cards with them at competitions and the Chief Steward or TD may request to see the card at any time.
- The Judge, Chief Steward or Technical Delegate (TD) at any show has the right to inspect the aids and declare an aid unsafe for horse or competitor. At no time should a competitor be secured in any way to the saddle or the horse. The competitor must be able to fall free of the horse.
- Adaptations to equipment or Velcro or similar materials that assist in the balance of the competitor may
 change the functional profile of that competitor. Competitors may be re-classified and, as a result, may
 change Grade. The competitor would then have the option to ride in the higher Grade or not to use such
 adapted equipment.
- Velcro/hook and loop closures may be used to assist the rider in the saddle. The total amount of Velcro, or similar material, allowed by any one competitor must not be more than 50 square cm. and must not exceed the dimensions of 3 cm. x 6 cm. per overlap contact. The total area of Velcro or similar material per leg must not exceed 3 cm. wide by 6 cm. of overlap contact and for safety reasons it is recommended that it is fastened in a 'V' shape."

Note: Riders should check with their National Federation before using any compensating aid in able bodied National competition

DESCRIPTION OF COMMONLY USED COMPENSATING AIDS

Table 1 lists the **commonly** used compensating aids.

SADDLE	STIRRUPS	BRIDLE/REINS	WHIPS
 Raised pommel Raised cantle Hard hand holds Soft hand holds Seat saver Knee rolls/blocks Thigh rolls/blocks Padded saddle flaps 	 Rubber bands around foot and stirrup Enclosed stirrups Strap from stirrup leather to girth Strap from stirrup to girth No stirrups One stirrup 	 Looped rein/s Connecting bar reins Bridging rein Ladder reins Split rein (with double bridle) Rein guides (rein through ring on saddle) Reins attached to stirrups Elastic insert in reins 	 One whip Two whips Strap attaching whip to hand
RIDING ATTIRE	POSTURE, POSTURAL S	UPPORTS & ORTHOSES	OTHER AIDS
 No gloves No boots Modified riding boots Gaiters Half chaps Off set spurs Safety vest 	 Velcro strap across thigh to L or R Arm sling Neck collar Ankle foot orthoses Prosthesis Wrist brace Back support Trunk support Rides with one hand 	o saddle	 Salutes with head only (Salute WHO) Callers Commander Commander using sign language Enlarged arena letters Use of radio frequency device (for hearing impaired) Voice

SADDLERY

1. SADDLES

A well fitting, well maintained saddle of <u>any</u> type suitable to the horse and rider shall be used. Examples include dressage saddles, sidesaddles and Western or English saddles. At the halt, there must be a clear 3 cm. between any means of support from the saddle and the competitor's trunk. Any adaptations to a saddle must allow the competitor to fall free of the horse. If modifications are made to the saddle, these may be subject to review.

Modifications

> Raised pommel and /or cantle

This modification provides assistance with balance for those riders with difficulty with trunk control. The depth of the seat must be less than <u>12 cm</u>. when pressed down (simulating a competitor sitting on the seat).



Measurement of the depth of the saddle when seat is pressed down, distance from seat to top of cantle or pommel is no greater than 12 cm.



ncorrect - cantle too High greater than 12 cm. from seat to top of cantle



Adapted saddle with raised cantle and seat saver (also single solid hand hold)



Adapted saddle with knee guides



Side saddle

> Seat saver

A seat saver is a removable attachment to the seat of the saddle for padding to protect the skin of those competitors with impaired sensation. (8428.5.0). Seat savers may be made of various materials such as leather, lambs wool or synthetic material.



Hand hold

A hand hold is a device attached to the front of the saddle in front of or above the pommel and may be made of soft material such as leather in the form of a strap. Alternatively it may be constructed of metal or wood with padding covering it for grip and safety. The use of a hand hold assists the rider to balance. Handholds may not be more than 10 cm. above the pommel when held and not more than 30 cm. wide (8428.4.2). A neck strap, around the horses' neck, may be used. Monkey grips or straps are considered a soft hand hold.



Saddle with soft hand hold across the pommel



Saddle with double hard hand hold



Saddle with single, hard hand hold

2. STIRRUPS

> Elastic bands

Riders may use elastic bands to assist to maintain position of the foot in the stirrup. Such elastic must be of a width and strength to allow the competitor to fall free of the horse. Other material (such as Velcro) may also be used (see above). A combination of enclosed stirrups and elastic bands may be used by riders with poor control of their ankle and lower leg.



Velcro to assist foot to stirrup



Devonshire boot and foot secured with rubber band around the heel



ber band securing the foot to the stirrup



Attaching elastic bands





Enclosed stirrups

A variety of "enclosed stirrups" are allowed for use by riders including: Devonshire boots, Anderson stirrups and caged stirrups. Those who wear footwear without a heel must use safety stirrups. Western or Oxbow stirrups, if used, must be fitted with a Devonshire type boot to prevent the possibility of the foot sliding through the stirrup.



Devonshire Boots - Covered Stirrups

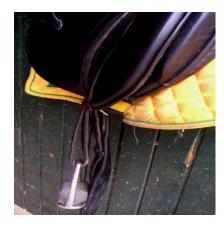




Open safety stirrups

Securing of stirrups to stirrup leathers or girth

A Velcro or thin leather strap may be used to attach stirrup irons to the girth strap to assist control of the lower leg for those riders with significant weakness or dysfunction in the legs. This aid will assist in steadying the lower leg and avoiding the stirrup(s) from swinging and hitting the horse.



Stirrup leather secured to girth



Stirrup secured to girth

> Riding with or without stirrups

Either two stirrups or no stirrups may be used for those riders with weakness, dysfunction in the legs, sensory disturbance, or an inability to use stirrups safely. One stirrup is used only for those riding side saddle or with one absent lower limb and no prosthesis.



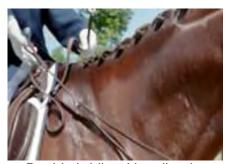
3. BRIDLE and REINS

> Double bridle

Double bridles are allowed in all Grades providing there is no official objection from the TD, Chief Classifier or member of the Ground Jury. If it is required tack for competition, the non-use needs to be indicated on the FEI PE ID Card. The two reins on one side must both go to the competitor's hand(s) or be connected into one rein (split rein) before reaching the competitor.



Double bridle with split rein and looped rein



Double bridle with split rein

> Reins

A variety of rein adaptations and modifications are possible including looped reins, knotted reins, built up reins or other means of providing improved grip to the reins for those with weakness or dysfunction in the hand/arms.

Any rein from any bit in the horse's mouth must be in direct contact with the competitor. Foot reins are only allowed when no other reins are going to be controlled by arm(s) or hand(s) from the upper part of the body of the competitor.



Elastic inserts on reins



Connecting rein bar For one handed riding and rein control.

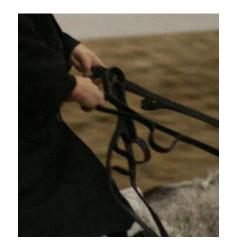
EXAMPLES OF LOOPED REINS















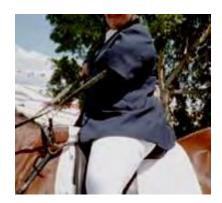




Rein Bow ® brand

> Rein guides

Rein guides are only allowed for competitors with short or no arms. If the rein is not used in a conventional manner, it must be in as straight a line as possible from the rider's point of contact on the reins to the horse's mouth. For competitors with two very short arms reins may be run through rings that are attached to the front of the saddle by leather straps. These rings must not be in a fixed position, but shall be loose.





> Whips

Up to two conventional whips of max 120 cm may be carried if required. Any alteration to conventional whips must be approved by the TD, Chief Steward or President of the Ground Jury. A whip is used on one or both sides. Whips may compensate for those unable to use their legs effectively for leg aids and may only be carried by competitors who are able to control their hand movements. At the salute, the competitor must either carry the whip(s) in the non-saluting hand, or salute with the head only. The whip may be attached to a glove or other clothing, as long as it will break free from the competitor.



Whip attached with Velcro

RIDING ATTIRE

Boots Plain black or brown half chaps (smooth leather) or gaiters to the knee may be used. If a

competitor's impairment does not allow the wearing of boots/shoes with heels (due to sensory impairments or deformities) and the competitor uses stirrups, PE approved safety stirrups must be

used. Boots may be modified to make them easier to put on and take off.

Gloves Gloves shall be worn if possible. These may be adapted for the competitor as needed. The

competitor may choose to not wear gloves.

Helmets A suitable riding hat must be worn at all times whilst mounted. It must be of international safety

standard (i.e. ASTM/SEI for equestrian sport) and have a well-fitting chinstrap and a three or four-point harness. The peak (if any) must be soft and flexible. Chinstraps must be fastened at all times

when mounted, and hats may not be removed for salutes or mounted prize-giving ceremonies.

Blindfolds Riders with functional Profile number 36 (blind) riding in Grade III must wear a PE approved blindfold,

blacked out glasses or blacked out swimming goggles when training at the competition venue and while competing. These may be subject to inspection by a classifier or other PE official immediately after the rider leaves the arena following the completion of the test. If a rider chooses not to wear a

blindfold, they must compete at Grade IV.

Spurs Spurs are optional for FEI PE competitions if there is no official objection from the TD, Chief Steward,

Chief Classifier or member of the Ground Jury. Spurs must not be offset, unless this is allowed as a compensating aid. Metal spurs with round hard plastic knobs are allowed (Impuls spurs) as are Dummy spurs with no shank. Competitors who cannot control their leg movements should have this

noted on their FEI PE ID card.

POSTURE, POSTURAL SUPPORT AND ORTHOSES

The competitor may choose to ride with or without a prosthesis or orthotic.

- > Trunk supports may be worn if medically necessary (with Medical Doctor approval). These must be indicated on the PE FEI ID card.
- > Arm Sling (pictured right) can be used if a competitor is unable to use an arm, or there is uncontrollable movement in an arm. The arm may be strapped to the body or worn in a sling.
- Riders with upper limb impairments may ride with one hand only, often with use of connecting rein bar.
- > A safety vest may be worn on the inside or outside of the jacket but is not considered a compensating aid.



Safety vest with inflatable air bladder



Safety vest with side openings

OTHER COMPENSATING AIDS (must be documented on the FEI PE ID card)

Salute with head only For FEI PE competitions, hats must not be removed at the salute and contact must be maintained on the reins. If necessary, the competitor may salute with the head only.

Use of voice Competitors in Grades III or IV may not use their voice at any time during the execution

of their test unless stated on the FEI PE ID card as a compensating aid. Competitors in Grade Ia, Ib or Grade II, or competitors with Profile 36 (totally blind) may use their voice

as an aid whilst riding in their allocated Grade, provided they do so in moderation.

Commander Competitors with intellectual impairment (Profile 39), visual impairment (Profile 36) or neurological conditions leading to memory loss may have a commander. Application with (reading of the test)

the required supporting documentation must be made to the PE Chief Classifier for permission for a commander. Tests may be commanded in English, or in the

competitor's own language.

Caller/Living Letters For those with visual impairment to indicate the location of the position of the Arena.

> Callers may only call the name of the letter(s). May also be accomplished by sound (electronic or mechanical) or enhanced visual cues. The competitor must provide the

callers/mechanisms.

Radio Those competitors, qualified as above, who are also deaf or hearing impaired may use Communication

sign language or radio communication. It is necessary for a steward to be present during

the dressage test if this form of commanding is being used.

FEI PE ID CARD (FEI Para Equestrian Identification card)

To participate in <u>FEI</u> PE competition the competitors must have a validated ID card available to show FEI officials.

The details on the card are:

Name
Nationality
Gender
Date of birth
International Functional profile
Equestrian Competition Grade
Date of Classification
Compensating Aids [All compensating aids that are allowed and may be used must be on the card]
Valid until [Renewable every 5 years].

Card details are checked as correct by the Head Classifier and signatured.

To apply for a card or to renew the card contact:

Mr Carina Mayer Email carina.mayer@fei.org
Address: Fédération Equestre Internationale

HM King Hussein I Building

Chemin de la Joliette 8 1006 Lausanne

Switzerland

The FEI PE ID card is issued only to riders with international Classification status and can be used for competitions run under FEI Rules.

In most instances National Federations will allow the use of the FEI PE ID card in competitions run under National rules. However, this may not always be the case as there may be a National system in place. Therefore, it is imperative that riders refer to their National Federation regarding the use of their FEI PE ID card for competitions held under National rules.