

Quick Reference Guide for the Youth/Young Adult Dressage Rider USDF, USEF, and Related Programs

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Program List Overview

Program Name/Link	Age Ranges	Membership Requirements	Jurisdiction	Contact
EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES				
USDF FEI Youth Clinic Series	Ages 12-21, ages 12-25 in FEI Pony/Children/Junior/Young Rider, and U25 if space allows	USDF PM; USEF Active Competing	USDF	USDF Youth Liaison jryclinics@usdf.org
USDF Youth/Young Adult Dressage Sport Horse Breeders Seminar	Ages 14-27	Participants must be USDF PM or GM; auditors can also be EM or non-members	USDF	USDF Sport Horse Liaison sporthorse@usdf.org
USDF/USEF Young Rider Graduate Program	Ages 20-28	USDF PM or GM	USDF/USEF	USDF Youth Liaison youth@usdf.org
US Equestrian Interscholastic Athlete Program	Grades 5-12	USEF Active Competing or Fan	USEF	equestrianathlete@usef.org
AWARDS AND RECOGNITION				
USDF Youth Dressage Rider Recognition Pin Program	Grades 6-12	USDF PM or GM	USDF	USDF Youth Liaison youth@usdf.org
USDF Youth Volunteer of the Year	Ages 21 and Under	USDF PM or GM	USDF	USDF Youth Liaison youth@usdf.org
USDF Youth Shining Star Award Program	Ages 21 and Under	Membership not needed; but eligible for Ravel Education Grant if USDF PM	USDF	USDF Youth Liaison youth@usdf.org
USDF Dressage Spirit Award	Ages 21 and Under	USDF PM, GM or Education	USDF	USDF Youth Liaison youth@usdf.org
USDF Nomination for USEF Youth Sportsman's Award	Ages 17 and Under	USDF PM; USEF Active Competing	USEF	USDF Youth Liaison youth@usdf.org

USDF Arts Contest	Ages 21 and Under	USDF PM or GM	USDF	artcontest@usdf.org
Unites States Pony Club (USPC)/USDF Dressage Recognition Awards	All ages	USDF PM or GM	USPC/USDF	activities@ponyclub.org
Other awards available: Dressage Seat Equitation Award, Rider Awards, Performance Certificates, Year End Awards, and All-Breeds Awards	Depends on specific award	Depends on specific award	USDF	allbreeds@usdf.org riderawards@usdf.org awards@usdf.org
SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS				
USDF Youth Convention Scholarship Program	Ages 21 and Under	USDF PM	USDF	USDF Youth Liaison youth@usdf.org
Ravel Education Grants	Available to Shining Star Recipients	USDF PM	USDF	USDF Youth Liaison youth@usdf.org
High Education Equestrian Scholarships	High School Seniors preparing to enter a College or University	USEF Active or Subscribing	USEF	National Breeds & Disciplines Program Manager lstovel@usef.org
Other Grants and Funding through The Dressage Foundation	Depends on specific grant	Depends on specific grant	TDF	TDF Director of Grants and Programs info@dressagefoundation.org
COMPETITIONS				
USDF/IDA National Quiz Challenge	IDA team members	USDF PM, GM or Education	USDF	USDF Youth Liaison youth@usdf.org
USEF/USDF Dressage Seat Medal Program (DSM)	Ages 18 and Under	To earn a qualifying score: USDF PM or GM; Semi-Finals and Finals: USDF PM and USEF Active Competing	USEF for Finals; USDF for Semi-Finals and Qualifying	USDF Youth Liaison youth@usdf.org
FEI North American Youth Championships (NAYC)	Ages 12-21	Rider: USDF PM, USEF Active Competing, FEI Registration	FEI with support from	Jr/YR Regional Coordinator or nayc@usdf.org

		Horse: USDF Life, USEF Life, FEI Registration, FEI Passport Owner: USDF PM or BM	USEF and USDF	
USEF Dressage National Championships (also known as the US Dressage Festival of Champions or FOC)	Ages 12-21	Rider: USEF Active Competing Horse: USEF Annual or Life Owner: USEF Active Competing	USEF	USEF Director of Dressage Programs - Kristen Brett kbrett@usef.org
US Dressage Finals	Junior/Young Riders at Training Level through Intermediate I	Rider: USDF PM and USEF Active Competing Horse: USDF Life and USEF Life or Annual Owner: USDF PM or BM and USEF Active Competing or Farm/Business	USDF	USDF Competitions Coordinator usdressage@usdf.org
OTHER YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT OPPORTUNITIES				
USEF Youth Programs	Varies			
GMO Youth Programs	Varies	USDF GM Membership	Varies	gmo@usdf.org

Division Ages

Per USEF DR119.3, for purposes of competition in the Dressage Division, the age groups are as follows:

- Junior: Individuals are eligible as Juniors until the end of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 18.
- Young Rider: Individuals are eligible as Young Riders from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 16 until the end of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 21.

- Adult: Competitors shall compete as Adults from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 22. Individuals possessing current amateur certification are only eligible as Adult Amateurs from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach age 22.

Per USEF DR119.4, for purposes of qualification for and participation in competitions conducted under FEI rules, age groups are as follows:

- Children: Individuals are eligible to participate in competitions and championships for Children from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 12 until the end of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 14.
- Pony Riders: Individuals are eligible as Pony Riders from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 12 until the end of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 16.
- Juniors: Individuals are eligible as Juniors from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 14 until the end of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 18.
- Seniors: Individuals are eligible as Seniors from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 18.
- Young Riders: Individuals are eligible as Young Riders from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 16 until the end of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 21.
- U25 Division: A person may compete as a U25 Rider from the beginning of the calendar year in which he reaches the age of sixteen (16) until the end of the calendar year in which he reaches the age of twenty-five (25).

Per USEF DR133, for purposes of competing in a USDF Dressage Seat Medal Semi-Final class, the age divisions are as follows:

- 13 and Under Division: A rider is eligible for the 13 and under Semi-Final class until the end of the calendar year in which he/she reaches the age of 13.
- 14 through 18 Division: A rider is eligible for the 14 through 18 Semi-Final class from the beginning of the calendar year in which he/she reaches 14 until the end of the calendar year in which he/she reaches the age of 18.
- Riders who are named Semi-Final Champions and Reserve Champions at age 13 or 18 will be eligible for the next year's final class in the respective age group in which they qualified.

Program FAQs

What do these commonly used acronyms mean?

- NAYC: North American Youth Championships
- FOC: USEF Dressage National Championships also known as the Festival of Champions
- DSM: Dressage Seat Medal Program

- FEI: Federation Equestre Internationale
- TOC: Test of Choice
- GMO: Group Member Organization

CHAMPIONSHIP PROGRAMS

Where can I find the qualifying requirements/selection procedures for NAYC, USEF Dressage National Championships (FOC), the US Dressage Finals, and the Dressage Seat Medal Finals?

- NAYC Selection Procedures: <https://www.usdf.org/competitions/competitions-championships/najrc/index.asp>
- FOC Qualifying Requirements: <https://www.usef.org/compete/disciplines/dressage/dressage-championships---national--fei/us-dressage-festival-of-champions>
- US Dressage Finals Requirements: <https://www.usdf.org/usdressagefinals/index.asp>
- DSM Finals Requirements: <https://www.usdf.org/competitions/competitions-championships/equitation/index.asp>

Where do you find the Ranking List for NAYC? Dressage Seat Medal Program? USEF Dressage National Championships?

- NAYC has three ranking lists:
 1. Ranking List for Children: <https://www.usdf.org/competitions/competitions-championships/najrc/qualifying-scores-ch-jr-yr.asp?Declared=Children>
 2. Ranking List for Juniors: <https://www.usdf.org/competitions/competitions-championships/najrc/qualifying-scores-jr-yr.asp?Declared=Junior>
 3. Ranking List for Young Riders: <https://www.usdf.org/competitions/competitions-championships/najrc/qualifying-scores-jr-yr.asp?Declared=Young>
- DSM has two qualified rider lists:
 1. Qualified by earning a 70% or above score in a qualifying dressage seat equitation class: <https://www.usdf.org/competitions/competitions-championships/equitation/qualifiedhorses.asp>
 2. Qualified by qualifying for regional championships: <https://www.usdf.org/competitions/competitions-championships/regionals/qualifying-rides.asp>
- FOC Ranking List: [USEF Website](#)

Which competitions do you have to submit a declaration or application of intent?

- You must submit an application/declaration of intent for NAYC, USEF Dressage National Championships (FOC), and the US Dressage Finals.

What is a FEI passport and do I need one?

- A FEI Passport is used as your horse's identification. It includes information about your horse's vaccinations, health records, etc. and is required to be nominated to an NAYC team. More information about the FEI Passport can be found here: <https://www.usef.org/forms-pubs/XyWhXYB4O8s/passport-101>.
- The process to obtain and validate a FEI Passport can be lengthy and it is recommended to apply for your passport in a timely manner.
- Passports are not required to compete in the Dressage Seat Medal Program or the USEF Dressage National Championships (FOC).

Can you compete in both NAYC and USEF Dressage National Championships? What are the differences?

- You can certainly compete in both competitions. The FEI North American Youth Championships (NAYC) for Dressage is a unique and prestigious competition which brings together the top Federation Equestre Internationale (FEI) Children, Junior and Young Riders, ages 12-21, from throughout North America and neighboring countries. The U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions showcases the top 12 (except under special circumstances) athletes and horses in 14 divisions and is not only limited to the FEI Children, Junior and FEI Young Rider Levels. One of the major differences is that NAYC is a team event, where Festival of Champions is an individual event.

Do all USDF recognized shows count as qualifying shows for the NAYC or the USEF Dressage National Championships?

- Only Official Qualifying Classes designated in the USEF National Qualifying Shows are permissible for qualification. Classes in CDICH/CDIP/CDIJ/CDIY/CDIU25s are also accepted, but scores from CDI classes are not automatically counted as qualifying events but instead must be submitted on a CDI Report form. A list of those competitions can be found here: <https://www.usef.org/compete/disciplines/dressage/dressage-championships---national--fei/north-american-youth-championships>

Do Test of Choice (TOC) classes count as qualifying scores for the NAYC or USEF Dressage National Championships?

- Children divisions TOC classes will only be allowed to count for the FEI Children Preliminary B Test. No other TOC classes are permitted.

NAYC SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

My rider is interested in competing in NAYC. Who is our first contact to get started?

- The [USDF Jr/YR Regional Coordinators](#) are your first line of contact for the NAYC competition.

My rider received qualifying scores at a CDI, why aren't they showing up on her online USDF scores?

- Scores from CDI competitions are not automatically recorded. These scores must be manually submitted by the competitor using the [CDI Report Form](#). Be sure to submit your scores within the time frames mentioned on the form.

Does my rider have to earn all his or her qualifying scores in their home region?

- No. Qualifying scores may be earned in any region. Scores may also be earned in other countries after obtaining prior permission from USEF.

What costs are involved with competing in the NAYC?

- Costs include the costs to participate in the qualifying competitions, hotel stays, travel costs (for the athlete, horse, and coach/trainer), food during your stay, membership and registration fees for the multiple organizations (USDF, USEF, FEI), the FEI Passport cost, etc. For more information on costs, please contact your [USDF Jr/YR Regional Coordinator](#).

What are some fundraising ideas to earn money for NAYC?

- Your [USDF Jr/YR Regional Coordinator](#) can give you great ideas on how to fundraise for your NAYC trip! Used tack sales, bake sales, car washes, horse beauty days (clipping, bathing, mane pulling), you name it!

What is the Certificate of Capability requirement and how do you meet it?

- The Certificate of Capability is required to qualify for the NAYC. It is earned once all the required scores, and minimum averages have been achieved. Two FEI (Junior or Young Rider) Individual test scores and two FEI (Junior or Young Rider) Team test scores must be earned with a minimum overall average of 64%. One FEI (Junior or Young Rider) Freestyle test score at 65% or above must be earned. Once these score requirements have been earned, the athlete will be notified via email that they are now eligible to submit the Certificate of Capability. This certificate certifies that the athlete/horse combination has earned a minimum overall average of 62.000% attributed by a panel of two (2) or more USEF 'S' or FEI Judges, in the FEI Team Test and FEI Individual Test at two different designated USEF/NAYC qualifying competitions. In addition, they must earn at least one (1) score of 65.000% in the FEI Freestyle, which is not computed into the overall average.
- Children division requires must earn at least one (1) score in the FEI Children Preliminary B Test, at least two (2) scores in the Team Test, and at least two (2) scores in the Individual Test in qualifying competitions to be eligible for nomination to a Region's team. Scores must be attributed by a panel of two (2) or more USEF 'S' or FEI Judges, in the Team Test and Individual Test. Scores may be attributed by USEF 'R', USEF 'S' or FEI Judges, in the Children Preliminary B Test. Athlete/horse combinations will not receive a '0' if they choose to not complete the Team or Individual Test in a qualifying competition. One (1) Team Test and one (1) Individual Test must occur during the spring season (January 1 through end of qualifying period), unless otherwise determined no later than February 1. The Team and Individual tests must be held as individual classes, which are specifically designated as NAYC Qualifying. For calculation purposes, the athlete/horse combination's overall average score will be determined by averaging the scores earned in the Team and the Individual Test from designated qualifying classes. "Test of Choice" (TOC) will not count for Individual or Team Tests. "Test of Choice" (TOC) classes will only be allowed to count for the FEI Children Preliminary B Test. Two FEI (Children) Individual scores and two team scores, and a Preliminary Test B score of at least 62% and the overall average of 62% must be earned.

What is a Certificate of Domicile?

- As a part of the application of intent for NAYC, every athlete or parent/guardian if the rider is a minor (under the age of 18) shall complete and submit a Certificate of Domicile. A rider may have only one domicile, which is where the rider has his or her permanent

home and where, whenever he or she is absent, intends to return. A minor's domicile follows that of the parent or guardian who has lawful custody of the minor (unless the minor is emancipated from their parent/guardian).

Once I submit my NAYC Certificate of Capability, can I still earn additional qualifying scores?

- Yes. We recommend submitting the certificate as soon as you earn it, even if you are not done competing in qualifying events.

Can my rider declare and get qualifying scores for both the FEI Children, Junior and FEI Young Rider divisions?

- Yes. The age divisions overlap, so if your child is between the ages of 16 and 18, they can earn scores in both the FEI Junior and FEI Young Rider divisions. If your child is 14, they can earn scores in both the FEI Children and FEI Junior divisions. However, a rider will not be able to compete in both multiple divisions at the NAYC competition, so in the event that they qualify for two divisions, they will need to choose which one they would like to compete in. Please note once a rider rides down centerline in the Young Rider division at NAYC, they will no longer be eligible to compete as a Junior in both NAYC and FOC.

OTHER QUESTIONS

Where do you find the prohibited drug list for horse and riders?

- Information on drugs and medications can be found here: <https://www.usef.org/compete/resources-forms/rules-regulations/drugs-medications>

Where can I find resources to help me design a freestyle?

- Freestyle help can be found here: <https://www.usdf.org/education/other-programs/musical-freestyle/index.asp>

Where can I find a certified coach/instructor for my child?

- USDF Honorary and Certified Instructor list: <https://www.usdf.org/about/contact/instructors.asp>

My rider will turn 18 in July; do they have to complete SafeSport training requirements if they want to compete in recognized shows?

- Yes. All competitors aged 18 and up must complete the SafeSport Training.

Does my horse have to be a certain age to ride in certain tests?

- There are age requirements to certain test levels. These age requirements can be found at the top of the test sheet.