



***USEF 2020 rule changes relate to a range of topics ranging from horse welfare to show coat color.***

The New Year brings changes to the United States Equestrian Federation rule book that governs all sanctioned equestrian competition. Affiliate, the U.S. Hunter Jumper Association, has created a simple guide of rule changes taking effect for the new competition year.

The following are important rule changes affecting hunter/jumper competition, aligned with their discipline and rule number for easier location in the rule book. These went into effect Dec. 1, 2019, for the 2020 competition year. The entire rule book can be found on [www.usef.org](http://www.usef.org).

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**Tack and Appointments:**

This rule change clarifies the proper use of a curb chain to protect horses from equipment that could inflict pain or discomfort. Curbs must be constructed of loose links, joints, and/or lie smooth against the jaw of the horse and be free of sharp or inhumane objects.

**Hunter Attire and Coat Color:**

This new rule specifies that conventional attire following the tradition of fox hunting is encouraged and preferred and that judges shall not eliminate a rider for inappropriate attire except for safety.

**Hunter and Pony Hunter Breeding:**

This rule change clarifies that horses and ponies in Hunter Breeding classes should be judged on the ability to become or produce hunters and adds the term "athleticism" to the traits by

which horses and ponies are judged.

### **Definition of a Complete Hunter Round:**

This rule change defines what qualifies as a completed Hunter round. This rule rewrite aims to eliminate the practice of attempting to force a class to split by having a horse-and-rider combination enter the ring but not complete a course. It also defines completion of an under saddle class.

### **Use of Electronic Devices:**

This rule states that the unsafe use of electronic devices, as determined by the competition steward in their sole discretion, including the use of cell phones with or without earphones/buds while mounted is prohibited in all areas designated for schooling and exercise and while longeing horses on competition grounds.

### **Jumper Prize Money:**

This rule outlines how prize money and entry fees will be determined and distributed if a class is combined due to insufficient entries as outlined in JP 122.1.c.

### **Jumper Sections/Classes Restricted by Horse Age:**

This rule is aimed to help clarify and guide course designers to construct safe and positive courses for the development of young jumpers. The rule includes course guidelines for all ages, 5-year-old Jumpers, 6-year-old Jumpers and 7-year-old Jumpers.

### **Sections/Classes Restricted to Junior, Amateur/Owner, Amateur Jumpers:**

This rule changes the title of classes to High (1.40m or 1.45m), Medium (1.30m or 1.35m) and Low (1.20m or 1.25m), for Amateur Owner Jumpers, Amateur Jumpers, and Junior Jumpers. Prize lists must identify classes as High, Medium or Low according to the definition of the rule. This rule also further clarifies cross-entry restrictions between the lowest height section of Junior, Amateur Owner, amateur Jumpers and CSI3\* Grand Prix classes offering \$25,000 or more in prize money at the same competition.

### **National Standard Jumper Classes:**

This rule change, under the Jumper rule book subchapter defining levels of difficulty (JP-4), creates a clear progression of fence heights from the American Standard (up to 1.40m) to National Standard (1.45m to 1.50m).

### **Horse Welfare:**

This new rule change in the Equitation chapter aims to provide awareness and focus on the commitment to the protection and welfare of equine athletes competing in Hunter/Jumping Seat Equitation sections.

Beyond rule changes, members should be aware that the US Equestrian Board of Directors recently voted to prohibit the use of Medroxyprogesterone acetate (MPA) in horses competing in USEF-licensed competitions effective December 1, 2019.

Additionally, farm and business entity owners should keep in mind that GR202 will now be in effect for the 2020 competition year. This rule amendment, passed by the US Equestrian Board of Directors at the 2017 USEF Annual Meeting, states, "If a horse(s) is owned by a farm or any other entity, at least one of the horse's owners, either Farm/Business or Individual, must also obtain an exhibitor registration pursuant to GR1106." The USEF provided members with a two-year transition period for compliance with this rule. If members have any questions regarding this rule and its implementation, they may contact USEF Customer Care by email at [customercare@usef.org](mailto:customercare@usef.org) or by calling 859-258-2472 during business hours.

Please note this listing is not a comprehensive list of all rule changes effective Dec. 1, 2019. All rule changes can be found on [www.usef.org](http://www.usef.org).

*Article provided by the USHJA. For more information, visit [www.ushja.org](http://www.ushja.org).*