

Dressage Canada Scribing Guide

Dressage Canada's goal with this Guide is to promote dressage scribing through providing guidelines and standards and to encourage volunteers to become actively involved in the sport of Dressage while at the same time furthering their knowledge, education and insight into the sport.

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INTRODUCTION

SCRIBING – A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON DRESSAGE

Dressage Scribing is a great experience for anyone interested in Dressage, a must for anyone who competes, and for Judges as they work their way through the judging system.

You will get a whole new perspective on how a test is judged. Scribing for a Judge at any level is an excellent way to enhance your own knowledge of this sport.

You will hear comments from the Judges in real time as the movements are executed. You will have a bird's eye view of horses and riders as they compete. You will be able to talk with the Judges and gain knowledge and insight into the sport of Dressage.

You will be able to make a difference by filling this important volunteer position, and become actively involved in the sport of Dressage.

Scribing is the art of writing down the scores and comments of the Judges at Dressage Competitions and Events. A Scribe neither adds nor deletes anything that is to go on record.

VOLUNTEER – IT'S EASY

Show organizers are appreciative of finding willing volunteers for Scribing. Check with your local dressage organization for a list of show dates and contact phone numbers or email addresses. Check the Competitions Calendar on the Dressage Canada Web Site for show information at www.dressagecanada.org.

Contact the show organizers and let them know that you are interested in becoming a Scribe and that you would like to volunteer. Some will let you do on the job training while others may want you to audit some classes in the actual Judge's booth before you go out on your own.

Volunteer at schooling shows initially where there is less pressure and possibly more time for the Judge to assist you and give you tips and guidance while scribing.

It is the hope of Dressage Canada that this scribing guide will provide useful information so that volunteers may be confident and prepared when starting off scribing for the first time.

DRESSAGE EDUCATION

The biggest advantage to Scribes is the education and insights that they themselves will receive while fulfilling a crucial volunteer role at any Dressage show. For this reason, Scribing is required for all Judge Candidates when upgrading. Scribing helps one understand how a movement should be ridden. Most Judges are happy to answer questions during breaks. They appreciate your volunteer efforts.

If you're interested in Scribing, this Dressage Canada Scribing Guide details Equine Canada Rules for scribing, etiquette while scribing, what is required and what to expect.

Most of all, this guide will provide you with insight into how to make the most of your Scribing experience to further your own Dressage education.

EQUINE CANADA RULES FOR SCRIBES

SECTION E - DRESSAGE

While scribing is a volunteer position at all horse shows, it is described officially in the Equine Canada Rule Book in Section E for Dressage in the following sub-sections:

2.13 JUDGES' SCRIBES (GENERAL)

- a) Each Judge must be assisted by a Scribe speaking the same language. Scribes must have knowledge of the tests being ridden. Scribes should not be an owner, coach/trainer or family member of a competitor/horse in the class(es) in which they are scribing. Every effort should be made to assign one Scribe only to each Judge for the duration of the competition. In special circumstances, a maximum of one change of Scribe per Judge per competition may be made. A first time Scribe must not be assigned to Judges for FEI levels. Marks and remarks made in the Judges' booth are to remain confidential and are not to be discussed by the Scribe with anyone.
- b) National, Regional and Provincial Championships – EC Dressage Judges may act as Scribes, providing they are competent and experienced at scoring FEI classes. A foreign Judge may request a Scribe with a fluent knowledge of **English/French** and the required terminology and experience. Judges' Scribes for all these competitions must have in-depth experience and proven competence as a Scribe. First time Scribes are not to be used.

2.17 PROTOCOL

- a) All officials, Judges, stewards and Scribes must be appropriately dressed.
(Jeans, shorts, tank tops etc. are not acceptable).
- b) Judges must be on the grounds 20 minutes (minimum) before their first class. Stewards must be on the grounds 30 minutes (minimum) before the first ride of each day. Judges' Scribes must be on the grounds 30 minutes (minimum) before their first class.

The following rules while not applicable to scribes themselves, affect the scoring of the test. All scribes need to be aware of how to score voice errors.

3.3 VOICE

The use of the voice in any way whatsoever or clicking the tongue once or repeatedly is a serious fault and must be penalized by the deduction of at least two marks from the movement in which it occurs. The use of the voice will incur deduction of marks each time it is used but does not constitute elimination, nor should it be scored as an error of test or error of course. For example, a judge awarding eight (8) to a movement must deduct two (2) or more points from the given mark (e.g. 8 becomes 6, comment: Voice).

3.18 FREESTYLE SCORING

- c) **NOTE:** Competition secretaries are encouraged to instruct the Judges' Scribes prior to judging of freestyle tests, to either a) NOT calculate the technical coefficients, OR b) to calculate the technical coefficients. (Often this is one area that causes confusion when the scorers receive the tests).

These rules as detailed in the Equine Canada Section E for Dressage will form the basis of the Dressage Canada Scribing Guide. Knowledge for Scribes will be further enhanced by many tips straight from Dressage Canada Judges, as well as basic descriptions of appropriate etiquette and common sense tips to help anyone become a proficient and experienced Dressage Scribe.

THE JOB OF THE SCRIBE

The sole duty of the Scribe shall be to record the Judges' scores and comments on the Horse and Rider's individual Dressage Test Sheet.

This is the volunteer position most sought after at Dressage Competitions. A Scribe records all the Judge's scores and comments for each ride. Basically, scribing is taking dictation.

One Scribe is needed per Judge each day and preferably for the duration of the show. A full day's commitment from a Scribe is preferred in order to provide continuity.

Scribing requires legible handwriting, rapid thinking, and a good knowledge of dressage terms. Familiarity with accepted abbreviations is a must.

Quiet, Formal, Polite and Professional are the characteristics of a good Scribe.

THE SCRIBE'S RESPONSIBILITY

Before the Class Starts

1. **Scribes must be on time** - The Scribe is expected to arrive at the show office 30 minutes prior to the first test according to the Equine Canada Rules in Section E for Dressage.
 - Expect to arrive at the show grounds before your scheduled time to get organized, familiarize yourself with the tests, and to have any questions answered.
 - Familiarise yourself with the arenas and other facilities such as the show office, washrooms and concession areas.
2. Scribes should familiarize themselves with who the **stewards** are and where they can be located.
3. When volunteering it is the Scribe's responsibility to alert the show manager of any possible **conflicts** so that scheduling can be done to avert problems.
4. At the show office you will pick up the tests, pens, a whistle or bell and a class schedule.
 - Bring spare pens and a clipboard may also be useful if space in the Judges' booth is limited.
 - Paper Clips (for Wind!) as well as a plastic sleeve to keep tests dry (for Rain!) would be useful to have in your Scribing Kit.
 - A watch, small clock and / or stop watch for Freestyles would be useful. (This may be supplied by the show organizers).
 - Take bottled water with you as you will be scribing for the same period of time as the Judge and will only be able to go for water or to the washrooms during breaks.

5. Make sure you have enough tests for the number of riders scheduled in the class.
6. Check that they are the **correct tests**, as well as one extra test for the Judge, and one or two spares in case of mistakes.
7. Ask the Show Secretary or Stewards if there have been any **changes or scratches**.
8. Review all the Tests that you are scribing for before the start of the class.
 - Memorising a few of the movements will give you an idea of where the competitor is in the test and when to expect the Judges' comments and score.
 - Familiarize yourself with the tests to be judged. You do not need to know each test by heart, but enough to put the scores in the correct spaces.
9. When the Judge arrives, introduce yourself and ask if she has any preferences for you as a Scribe.

When Each Test Begins

10. If a rider does not show up, write 'scratch' or 'no show' on the front of the test sheet or on the label if there is one.
11. As each horse and rider passes the Judge prior to entering the ring, the Scribe must check the bridle number (or saddle pad number) to ensure **correct assignment** of the rides to be tested.
 - If the tests are already filled out with competitors name and number, ensure that the number matches the competitor as they come into the ring. If the tests are not already filled out, write the number for the next test, then confirm that this number matches the number on the horse/rider entering the ring.
12. You will need to **keep track of any scratches**, have an idea of how well you are keeping on time, and keep track of details in general.

During the Test

13. Although the scorers will multiply the coefficients for you, if you do so yourself remember to double check the number and the multiplication factor.
14. If there are errors of test, make sure the **correct number** is shown at the **bottom of the test sheet**.

When Each Test Ends

15. Check to see **that all movements in the test have been scored** and draw the Judge's attention to any that have been missed.
16. Draw the judge's attention to **any changes that require his/her initials**.
17. When giving the test sheet to the Judge for their overall comments, always point out which movements they have missed completely and which comments you are in doubt as to their correct position. You should not speak whilst the test is in progress.
18. Check to see that **the Judge has signed the test**.

Some of these details are the responsibility of the show management. However, it is in the best interest of all involved for you as a Scribe to help with these details as well. Everyone can make a contribution to a smoothly run show, and the Scribe can play a vital role.

THE SHOW MANAGER'S RESPONSIBILITY

1. Each Judge and Scribe should be supplied with accurate class lists, programs or schedules giving the order of rides as well as riders' names and numbers.
2. There should be a labeled test for every competitor, as well as a blank test for the Judge to use throughout the class.
3. Ensure that the Scribe has a supply of pens and a clipboard if necessary.
4. Runners will be assigned to pick up tests on a regular basis.
5. Efforts should be made by the show organizers to assign one Scribe for each Judge for the duration of the show.

While this is not always possible Scribes should commit to a full show day.

GENERAL TASKS WHILE SCRIBING

1. Get to know how the Judge you are scribing for likes to work.
 - Do they say the score first then the comment?
 - Will they always give a comment or tell you when there is no comment?
 - Do they give the movement number when giving the mark?
2. **Help keep the Judge on time** by checking times and numbers on the schedule and reporting quietly to her/him.
3. From time to time a Runner will appear to collect complete score sheets. Make sure the sheets **are signed and complete** before handing them over.
4. If no runner picks up the tests the Scribe should deliver all accumulated tests to the office at any given break. **Never leave tests in the Judge's box unattended!**
5. Keep a record of what tests you have handed to the runner/scorer's office. In the event of a missing test (and it does happen!) - it makes it easier to find.

GENERAL RULES AND TIPS FOR SCRIBING

DRESS CODE

The Judge will be wearing formal attire so plan to dress accordingly. According to the Equine Canada Rules in Section E listed previously, Jeans or shorts, tank tops or T-shirts are not considered appropriate. Dress well to show respect to both Judges and riders.

Bring a hat, sunscreen, lip balm and a warm jacket with you. You will have little opportunity to get anything once the class begins.

Be prepared for any kind of weather.

Think formal and professional, and be prepared.

ABBREVIATIONS (SEE APPENDIX A)

Abbreviations are the key to Scribing. For example, instead of writing disobedient, you would write **disob** or **c-line** instead of centerline. You may draw symbols such as a box, arrow or squiggle to denote square, forward or weaving. Remember to write in cursive (or you may get writer's cramp!).

The Judge will usually give you his/her comments first and then the score. As you are writing a comment, run your finger down to the next movement on the sheet to keep your place.

It is permissible, and often unavoidable, to use obscure symbols and notations. For example **not square** is written as “**not**”, then a **drawing of a box**. Feel free to improvise. ‘Above the bit’ is usually an **up arrow** followed by the word “**bit**”.

The Judge may have a saying that is repeated often. Try to find a shorthand version for this. Familiarize yourself with the comprehensive list of abbreviations in **Appendix A**.

NOTE: All abbreviations should be intelligible; Try not to use abbreviations or odd symbols that cannot be clearly understood..

THE SKILL OF SCRIBING AND TAKING DICTATION

It is important that a Scribe write down the Judges’ comments quickly and clearly. This means that your handwriting needs to be legible, and you must use complete words whenever possible. An abbreviation that seems obvious to you may be meaningless to the rider trying to decipher the test later. Use appropriate abbreviations when necessary. (See Appendix A).

It is also important that Scribes **have a good working vocabulary of dressage terms** so that they can understand the Judges’ comments. This familiarity of terms will lessen any potential confusion as the Judge calls out comments for one movement after another.

It is helpful if the Scribe is familiar with the test that is being ridden, even if it means they have just read through it before the start of the class. That way they have an idea about what movements are coming next and can anticipate when a score will be given. This becomes vitally important as the tests become more and more complex.

Be especially aware that sometimes scores are given for the overall quality of a movement, in addition to the specific movement itself. These are easy to miss.

Scribing is the ability to write quickly and legibly, and use appropriate abbreviations.

SCORING AND DEALING WITH ERRORS

Write your score clearly in the relevant box on the test sheet. Familiarize yourself with the spaces on the blank test and where it is appropriate to record comments, scores, and errors.

Sometimes errors occur for the competitor:

If the rider goes off course, the Judge will ask you to put a -2 on the test.

If it happens again, the Judge will ask you to put down -4 on the test.

If a Rider uses Voice or clicks to the horse:

The Judge will ask you to put down the actual mark for the movement, then put a line through it, deduct 2 points putting this mark above, and write "Voice" as the comment.

This is to let a rider know what they would have scored had they not used their voice.

The Judge will tell you how many marks to deduct for each error.

At the end of the ride, count up the errors and write them in at the bottom of the test sheet where it says "Errors". This will help the show office staff a great deal because sometimes errors are not always noticed.

If you have made an error, simply draw a line through it and write the correct remark above it.

NOTE: The Judge needs to initial any corrections.

If you have missed a score skip it and ask the Judge during a lull in the test or at the end. Sometimes the fault is the Judges and he/she simply forgot to score the movement.

Errors will happen but don't let them throw you. Correct them the best you can and move on.

SCORING FREESTYLES AND FEI TESTS

Scoring Freestyle and FEI tests are a bit different from the other tests. Try to keep your finger tracking in the right place as the test progresses. Freestyles can be scores only but some judges will add comments. You score each movement each time it is performed. For instance, three canter pirouettes are given three separate scores and the Judge will determine the final score. Some boxes have a line through them to denote left and right such as half-pass left and right. Score each one accordingly. It is a good idea to ask the Judge beforehand how he/she would like the Freestyle scores recorded.

Be aware that scoring freestyle and FEI tests are different from scoring lower level tests.

SCRIBING ETIQUETTE

The principle duty of a Scribe is to simply write down what is being dictated to them.

This you must do without reaction or comment. Judging is the Judge's responsibility and you as a Scribe should never offer any insights or explanations of what you see in the ring.

- **DO NOT** Offer any comments or explanations to the Judge on the test being performed.
- **DO NOT** Talk to the Judge while the competition is in progress, unless she/he invites your comment. Judging is hard work, and takes a lot of consideration and concentration.
- **DO NOT** Comment on horses or competitors either positively or negatively.
- **DO NOT** Identify the competitor to the Judge even if it is someone you know well.
- **DO NOT** Question the Judge in the middle of a test. Save your questions until the test is finished.
- **What you hear in the judge's booth is confidential** – you must not repeat what you hear or provide an opinion based on what was seen or said.

Normally you are responsible for checking that the rider's number matches the number on the test and recording comments and scores only, but sometimes the Judge will have you ring the bell or record final remarks. **Keep in mind that it is not appropriate to argue or question the Judge's remarks, make comments or talk about any the riders.**

It is also imperative that you do not distract the Judge with idle chatter or questions about training methods. Things can move quickly, and it is easy to become distracted and get behind.

Take your lead from the Judge with regards to conversation. Some Judges will offer insights to their reasoning while others will simply give their scores and comments for movements.

Be courteous and respectful, and let the Judges concentrate on doing their job.

STAY FOCUSED AND ATTENTIVE

As a Scribe you need to stay focused and attentive to what is going on in the ring and be certain that you and the Judge are synchronized with the competitor. This means keeping an eye on the test, an eye on the competitor, and an ear on the Judge while keeping your place.

If you believe you are missing a score, quietly mention this immediately to the Judge so that the two of you don't fall behind and out of synch.

One way to do this is to ask, "Is this the score for the transition?" Occasionally the Judge may accidentally omit a score, and they will appreciate a prompt so that they too can keep on track.

If a score for a movement has actually been missed, expect to just go on with the scoring leaving that space blank. It is impossible to backtrack in the middle of a ride, and the Judge will have to fill that mark in at the end of the test.

Stay focused and attentive to what is going on in the ring and be certain that you and the Judge are synchronized with the competitor.

APPENDIX A - SCRIBING SYMBOLS

<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Definition</u>
A	Dressage letter "A"	f/h or f/hand	forehand
abr	abrupt	forw, FW	forward
@	at	gd	good
attn	attentive	ht	halt
bk	back	ha	haunches
bal	balance	h/in	haunches in
bt	beat	hd tilt	head titled
b/f	before	h/legs, hl	hind legs
b/h or beh	behind	hur	hurried
bend	bending	imp	impulsion
bet	better	inattn	inattentive
b/n	between	incomp	incomplete
C	Dressage letter "C"	inw	inward
cad	cadence	irreg	irregular
ct, cant	canter	lack imp	lack impulsion
c-line, CL, cl	center-line	LF	left front
O	circle	LH	left hind
col	collected	lat	lateral
cor	corner	ld	lead
crkd	crooked	lg	large
dpt	depart	L, l	left
diag	diagonal	Draw box symbol	square
dir	direction	obv	obvious
disob	disobedient	ord	ordinary
eng	engaged,	outw	outward
ext	extended, extension	pos	position
flex	flexed, flexion	prec	precise

<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Definition</u>
reg	regular	thru	through
res	resistance	trans	transition
R, r	right	tr	trot
rhy	rhythm	t/ ha	turn on haunches
rush	rush, rushed	t/ for	turn on forehand
RF	right front	unstd hd	unsteady hand
RH	right hind	unus	unusual
sal	salute	us	usual, usually
satis	satisfactory	vert	vertical
serp	serpentine	v	very, volte
sh-in	shoulder-in	wv	weaving
sl,slt	slight, slightly	w/	with
sm	small	wr	wrong
str	straight	X	Dressage letter "X"

If the Judge agrees, the Scribe may be able to **circle or underline words** in the directive ideas. **For Example:** The description of the stretchy circle where the directive says 'some contact to be maintained.'

APPENDIX B - ORGANIZING A SCRIBING CLINIC

Attached is a sample registration form used in a 2003 scribing clinic at the York Equestrian Centre which outlines a possible format for a Dressage Scribing Clinic.

In preparation for this, a video was made which included Training through Fourth Level tests taken from "M". This Video (DVD) will be made available to Riding Clubs / Associations as a resource through Dressage Canada. Preferred rates will be given to Dressage Canada Riding Clubs.

Due to the rather large number of registrants for this particular Scribing Clinic, two basic Judges were hired who had a lot of scribing experience. The second Judge was needed as the Scribing Clinic was run in conjunction with a schooling show.

For the practical scribing part of the clinic, the two clinic Judges were placed at B and E.

Each Judge was surrounded by about 8 Scribes who then wrote down the Judges Scores and Comments just as they would for an individual Judge at a recognized show.

Scribing Clinic Completion Certificates were handed out at the end of the clinic for the newly initiated Scribes.

Final Comment from the Clinic Organizer:

"In truth 90% of the new Scribes would not be ready to Scribe at a national competition, but would definitely be ready for a schooling or primary show, and with one or two shows under their belt those that wanted to continue would be fine. It was also interesting that many took the day course to understand further what their children were learning.

I have done several Scribing Clinics and heartily recommend that riding clubs take this on."

APPENDIX C - SAMPLE SCRIBING CLINIC APPLICATION FORM

EQUESTRIAN CENTRE [NAME]

Scribing Clinic [Date 1] OR [Date 2]

Cost: \$25.00 per session

These clinics are for anyone interested in being a Scribe at a Dressage competition. Open to individuals who have never written for a Judge, and to those who would like an opportunity to talk about scribing the new tests.

Schedule

10:30 Meet in the Resource Centre for Registration & Coffee

11:00 Introduction & Viewing of Videotape Tests

Classroom Practical Using Videotape and Previous Tests

12:00 Lunch Provided by Clinic - Opportunity to Talk with Today's Judge

1:00 Practical Experience

All registrants will Scribe for shadow Judges during afternoon's regular competition

3:30 Wrap Up Session in the Resource Centre

Discussion and Question & Answer Period

REGISTRATION FORM		
PLEASE CIRCLE CLINIC:	DATE 1	DATE 2
Name:	Tel:	
Address:	Email:	
	Fax:	
Previous Scribe Experience:		
Payment by Cheque: (Payable to xxxxxxxxxx) I am enclosing a cheque for \$25.00 _____		

Reminder: All participants should bring appropriate clothing for sitting in the Main arena during the afternoon session.