

Introduction

These rules shall apply to all RDA riding activities that take place during RDA Group sessions; discipline specific and competition rules can be found separately.

Horses

Bridles, saddlery and other equipment used shall be supple, in good condition, fit the horse and be thoroughly checked regularly.

No bridle, saddlery or other equipment shall be used in a way that causes the horse pain, discomfort or distress.

Bridles:

- Only a standard bridle (see noseband section below) or a simple double bridle should be used. If a double bridle is used, its use and fitting must be approved by the County or Regional Coach, or Regional Equine Advisor.
- All reins must be attached to a bit or a headcollar, if being led from a coupling that is attached to the bit.
- When a coupling is used, it must be correctly and safely fitted to the bit and short enough so that it doesn't move up and over the horse's chin. Couplings should be fitted below a rider's rein to prevent interference.
- When using headcollars under a bridle, the noseband of the bridle must be removed.
- Any rein from any bit in the horse's mouth should be in direct contact with the participant. If there are circumstances where a participant is not using the reins, they must be twisted and tied up into the throatlash.
- Only one set of reins should be attached to a bit. If a double bridle is used each bit must have its own rein attached on each side.
- If a participant is unable to use two reins with a pelham bit they may use Pelham roundings.
- Non-standard bridles should not be used. This includes any form of bitless bridle (including hackamores). However if, in exceptional circumstances, a group is considering using one, its use and fitting must be approved by the Regional or County Coach or Regional Equine Advisor.



Coupling fitting



Pelham Roundings

Grass/Daisy Reins:

Correctly fitted grass/daisy reins are permitted when riding on grass only.

Correctly fitted grass reins should be clipped to the bit with the clip facing outwards then should run up through the browband loop, then back down the equines neck and attach to the D rings on the saddle. There should be slack in the reins to allow the equine to bend and lower the neck slightly to stretch.



Correctly Fitted Grass Reins

Daisy reins must be fitted to allow the horse to move and stretch its neck. It must not be fitted too tight where it affects the equines natural movement.



Daisy reins

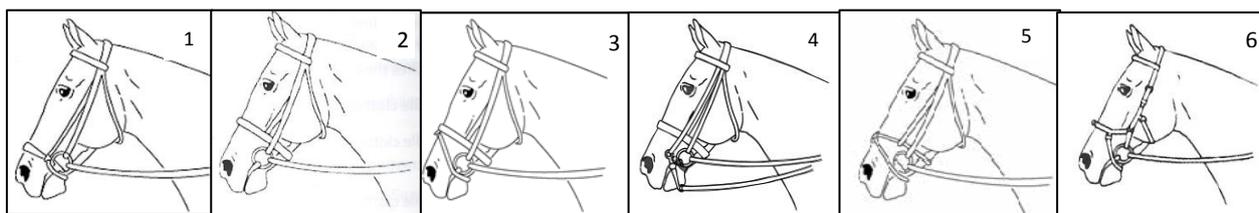
Neck Straps:

Neck straps not attached by a breastplate or similar are not permitted.

Nosebands

- a) Only one noseband may be worn.
- b) The following nosebands are approved for RDA use:-

1. Dropped noseband	4. Double bridle with cavesson noseband, bridoon bit and curb chain
2. Cavesson noseband	5. Mexican Grackle
3. Flash noseband	6. Micklem bridle (Micklem bridle must be worn with a bit)
N.B. 1,3,5 & 6 are not permitted when a double bridle is used	



Permitted Bits

Great care must be used when fitting any bits, for the welfare of our horses. As well as ensuring the bits are correctly fitted, the group must also consider the skills of the rider in each session. If anyone is unsure or needs advice, groups can contact their Regional or County Coach, or Regional Equine Advisor.

If groups intend to compete they MUST refer to the discipline competition rules to ensure they have got an acceptable bit for their competition.

Curb Chain

A Curb Chain must be fitted correctly and ensure that it is not fitting too tight.



Curb Chain

Saddles:

- Saddles should be worn; English, western saddles and side-saddles can be used.
- Where it is of benefit to a participant, and related to their medical or physical condition, a back pad may be used instead of a saddle. The pad must be secured by a wide webbing surcingle with a buckle fastening. A roller with a handle may also be used to secure the pad. Consideration must be given to the size and shape of the equine being used and the goals for each participant.
- Vaulting rollers are used in approved vaulting groups only.
- Seat savers may be used.
- Saddle cloths and numnahs must be correctly fitted and fit well up into the front arch and gullet of the saddle and must not rub down on the withers.

Stirrups

- A stirrup iron should be one inch wider than the width of the participants foot. When the foot is in place, there should be ½ inch of space on either side of the foot.
- Velcro stirrup straps are permitted.
- Elastic bands may be used where appropriate but must be able to snap easily.
- Peacock stirrups are permitted; however it is an incomplete stirrup and as such, has an inherent structural weakness. Whilst there is no specific weight limit, great care must be taken not to overload the stirrup and a participant's weight, balance and ability should all be taken into account when considering their suitability to use the stirrups. Only the correct peacock leather fitting and rubber strap can be used; if they break they must be replaced by the correct straps and not any improvised alternatives.
- Participants cannot ride with just 1 stirrup unless they are riding side saddle or when a user of a prosthesis (leg) has opted not to wear it whilst riding.
- Participants may ride without stirrups except when showjumping or endurance riding when stirrups MUST be worn.



Velcro Stirrup Straps

Participants/Volunteers

Suitable Clothing

- Participants and helpers should wear comfortable and suitable clothing (long trousers and long sleeved tops are recommended).
- Jackets and body warmers, if worn, must be fastened.
- It is recommended that any jewellery (including piercings) is removed and that long hair should be tied back.
- Gloves are recommended.

Headwear:

Participants

An approved hat must be worn at all times when mounted and must comply with the current RDA Health and Safety policy including any temporary standards. The current standards are:

- PAS015 (1998 or 2011) with BSI Kitemark;
- ASTM F1163 with SEI Kitemark;
- SNELL E2001
- VG1

All hats should be routinely checked for wear, tear and defects. If the hat has been used during a fall, or it has been dropped, it must not be used again.

In some cases, where a standard hat is not suitable, alternative headwear can be worn provided RDA's alternative hat wear rules are followed as detailed below:

- a. Non-standard hats (including specially made, by a reputable manufacturer, riding hats, other kite marked helmets e.g. ski, cycle, skateboard), can be assessed by a Regional or County Coach, or someone who has been approved by the Regional Coach. Anyone assessing hat suitability **MUST** have been on a BETA hat fitting workshop.
- b. Consent signed on the "Alternative Hat Assessment Form" by the Participant/Parent/Guardian/Carer, confirming they understand that it is a non-standard hat.
- c. Participant and hat to be re-assessed annually.
- d. The hat must not be used by another participant without an assessment.
- e. There may be exceptional circumstances when a carriage driver has to drive without a hat. Before this can happen the "No Hat Form" must be completed and sent to the Carriage Driving Co-ordinator at National Office, along with a written request stating why the driver needs to drive without a hat. This request will then go to the Carriage Driving Committee for approval, before any driver without a hat can drive.
- f. Children or adults of the Sikh religion are exempted from any hat ruling while they are wearing a turban. Religious head wear (hijabs, yamulkes etc) can be worn providing they will not come undone or are not fixed to the head by a hard object e.g. brooch, or could present a danger to the participant. There are various balaclavas/riding snoods on the market which are made

specifically to use under hats instead of hijabs or some other headwear. These are available from www.kramer.co.uk. In these cases, an alternative hat form must be completed.

Hats for volunteers

Although it is not mandatory to wear hats, if an RDA Volunteer chooses to do so, the hat must fit into the current standards listed above.

Footwear:

- The footwear of all participants must be checked before they are allowed to take part.
- Footwear shall be recognised riding boots or other sturdy smooth soled footwear with a heel. Shoes or boots without heels, or lighter types of footwear are not acceptable for riding, unless toe caps are used.
- For vaulting footwear, please see discipline specific rules.
- Helpers should wear sturdy shoes or boots.

Whips:

- One whip, or two if necessary, may be carried.
- Please see discipline rules for any length restrictions.

Spurs:

- Spurs may only be worn by participants who are able to control their leg movements.
- 2 matching spurs must be worn unless the participant is riding side-saddle or riding with a prosthesis.
- Spurs should be made of metal & the band around the heel must be smooth.
- Spurs with a smooth rotating rubber, metal or plastic ball on the shank are permitted.
- Swan-neck & 'Comb' spurs are not permitted.
- Any shank on the back of the heel must point towards the rear and the end must be clearly horizontal to the ground or pointing downwards.
- No spur shall extend more than 2.5cm from the rear of the boot.
- Dummy spurs are permitted.



Dummy Spurs

Excessive use* of whips or spurs is forbidden.

*Excessive use

It is the responsibility of the coach to ensure that if whips or spurs are carried/worn that they are not be used to the detriment of the horse.

N.B. Constant leg movement by a participant on a horse's side may also cause rubs or sores which must be avoided.

Special Equipment

Additional Special Equipment may be used to aid a participant, the same rules regarding condition, fit and suppleness must also apply. If in doubt about Special Equipment please contact the RDA Special Equipment Advisor via www.rda.org.uk/running-your-group/special-equipment/ .