PONY CLUB members may choose to follow one or all of three riding tracks. They are: Traditional, Hunter Seat Equitation or Dressage.

D Rating: D-level Horse Management Ratings are an introduction to the safety habits and knowledge of the daily care of a pony and tack. Those members selecting to ride on the Flat learn to ride independently and with control, maintaining a reasonably secure position at the walk, trot and canter. Candidates may select to ride over low fences (Classic) or specialize in Hunter Seat Equitation. All D ratings are awarded at the club level.

C-1 and C-2 Ratings: The C-1 and C-2 is a Pony Club member learning to become an active horseman, to care independently for pony and tack and to understand the reasons for what he or she is doing. C-1 and C-2 riding members show development towards a secure, independent seat and increasing control and confidence on the Flat and if desired, over fences (Classic) or to specialize in Hunter Seat Equitation. The C-1 and C-2 ratings are awarded at the club level.

The H-B, C-3, B, H/H-A and A Ratings are facilitated on a national basis and require a greater depth of knowledge and proficiency than the earlier ratings. Successful candidates are competent, all-around horsemen, active and contributing members of USPC, who participate in Pony Club activities. They are also thoughtful leaders who set an example for all levels.

The H-B Rating covers Horse Management knowledge that demonstrates increasing knowledge and competence in the care and handling of horses.

The H/H-A Rating requires the knowledge, experience and maturity to evaluate and care for a mount’s needs efficiently and in a variety of circumstances, and to teach riding and horse care to others.

Members may choose to follow one or all three specialty riding tracks. They are Traditional, Show Jumping or Dressage.

The C-3 Rating reflects a basis of competence in riding and horses care that will make possible a lifetime of pleasure with horses. If the C-3 riding test is passed before the H-B, the member becomes a C+.

The B Rating is for the active horseman and Pony Club member who is interested in acquiring further knowledge and proficiency in riding. The B is able to ride experienced mounts with confidence and control. The B should be able to ride and care for another person’s experienced mount, maintaining proper mental and physical condition without undoing any of the mount’s education. The B understands and is able to explain the reasons for what he or she is doing and to contribute to the education of younger Pony Club members.

The A Rating, the highest rating, is divided into two parts: the H/H-A, which covers horse management, teaching and training and the A, which tests the riding phase. The A is able to ride mounts at various levels of schooling with judgement, tact and effectiveness; to train young mounts; and to retrain spoiled mounts. Like the B, the A understands and is able to explain the reasons for what he or she is doing and to contribute to the education of younger Pony Club members.

NOTE: In addition to its instructional programs, USPC offers a variety of activities at club, regional, inter-regional and national levels for team and individual participation. These activities include Eventing, Dressage, Foxhunting, Quiz, Mounted Games, Hunter Seat Equitation, Show Jumping, Tetrathlon, and Poloocrosse. Achieving a rating does not necessarily qualify the Pony Club member for competition in any horse sport. Further study and preparation for a particular activity, including working as a team member, may be necessary.
THE C-1 STANDARD

Riding Test Expectations
Candidate should ride with confidence and control on the flat and over fences, demonstrating a hunter seat equitation position and use of natural aids. The candidate should begin riding mount freely forward in balance and rhythm while developing a light contact.

Riding on the Flat
Ride test consistently demonstrating riding test expectations. Demonstrate mount’s warm-up routine for everyday work. Discuss candidate’s warm-up for both rider and mount with examiner. Work mount at walk, trot and canter, with smooth transitions, demonstrating correct bend, performing straight lines, circles, and figure eights with simple transitions at each gait. Develop a steady trot and canter in a rhythm. Demonstrate long rein, loose rein and light contact at walk and trot. Demonstrate a rein back (2-3 simple steps back). Discuss performance with examiner discussing the following: the rider's hunter seat equitation position, whether or not mount was moving freely forward in balance and rhythm, and whether rider established a light contact.

Riding Over Fences
Ride over fences using Riding Test Expectations. Ride over small gymnastic grid of three fences finishing with an ascending oxer set at, but not exceed, 2'9" set at appropriate distances for mount's stride. Ride over jump course of 8 to 10 obstacles; include a combination set at an appropriate distance for mount’s stride. The majority of fences should be set at, but not exceed, 2'9". Grid distances and combination should be adjusted for individual mounts. Discuss performance with Examiner, including steadiness of pace and how ride could be improved.

Riding in the Open
Ride safely with control in a group, on a suitable mount, at the walk and trot outside of the ring. Discuss performance with Examiner giving reasons for any problems encountered.

Horse Management Expectations
The candidate should show a developing awareness of cause and effect in the care of own pony. He/she should be familiar with local common horse terms. Assistance is recommended in demonstration of bandaging.

Turn Out/Tack
Attire to be correct for Hunter Seat Equitation. Pony Club pin. Long hair neatly up or back. No inappropriate jewelry. Mount to be well groomed, reflecting regular care with a healthy coat; no sweat or dirt. Mane and tail brushed with little, if any, dandruff. External areas around sheath/udder clean. Feet picked out and reflecting regular farrier care. Eyes, nose, lips, dock clean. Tack to be safe, properly adjusted, supple and reflecting regular care. No jockeys or dust. All stress points clean. No cracked leather. Metal clean and polished and stirrup pads clean. Identify tack on own mount and discuss fit. Demonstrate proper adjustment of blanket/sheet and halter.

Conditioning
Discuss what is meant by conditioning and how to condition for a particular Pony Club activity of your choice.

Nutrition
Describe how feeds are measured and weighed. Know amount and type of feed for own mount. Describe characteristics of good and bad feed, watering, and pasture.

Stable Management
Discuss types of bedding appropriate for your area. Be able to put a blanket on mount safely. Discuss types and causes of stable vices. Describe and give reasons for three types of clipping. Describe conditions which foster internal and external parasites, procedure for parasite control in pasture and stall management, ways to control flies, bot eggs.

Pony Parts, Conformation & Lameness
Identify good and bad points of basic leg conformation. Describe five common unsoundnesses as to location and outward appearance.

Travel Safety
Discuss basic equipment needed for mount’s safety and comfort during trailer travel. Demonstrate trailer safety check from trailer safety checklist (on USPC website under forms).

Record Book
The C-1 is expected to keep a careful Record Book of all immunizations, veterinary visits, farrier visits, etc. The book must be brought to the test for review and critique. Must have records for at least 6 months. Records should reflect appropriate depth of knowledge for this level.

Health Care & Veterinary Knowledge
Describe how to treat minor wounds. Discuss: Regular worming control for own mount; how and why to deworm new mounts in barn. Know health care schedule for own mount including dates of inoculations (tetanus, encephalomyelitis, etc.), deworming, floating of teeth, shoeing. Measure and record pulse, temperature and respiration of own mount at rest with assistance of examiner.

Introduction to Horse Sports
List all the horse sports that are offered in USPC.

Teaching
Demonstrate a safety and tack inspection for a D Pony Club member under direct supervision of Examiner. Explain to the D member the reason for the check, the process, and any safety issues found.
Land Conservation
Name three different uses of land on which you, or others, ride.
Examples: Farmland, fair grounds, crops, etc.
If your region conducts an Eventing Rally, determine who owns the land where the rally is held and the total amount of acres owned.
Identify one place in your area previously used for equestrian activities that is no longer available.

Leading & Longeing
Discuss reasons for longeing.
Discuss equipment necessary and safety procedures.
Demonstrate jogging mount, moving mount actively forward from the whip, with smooth transitions.

Foot & Shoeing
Discuss the five steps in shoeing.
Recognize farrier tools and know their uses.

Bandaging
Apply stable bandage under direct supervision and with assistance of examiner.

THE C-2 STANDARD
Riding Test Expectations
Candidate should ride with confidence and control on the flat and over fences, demonstrating a secure hunter seat equitation position and progress toward an independent seat and coordinated use of aids. The candidate should begin to initiate free forward movement, establishing balance and rhythm while developing a light contact.

Riding on the Flat
Discuss the meaning of the Riding Test Expectations. Ride consistently demonstrating riding test expectations.
Demonstrate warm-up for flat work including rider exercises.
Discuss candidate’s warm-up for rider and mount.
Work mount at walk, trot and canter, changing directions at least twice in each gait, using coordinated aids, maintaining even rhythm, balance and impulsion and smooth transitions.
Demonstrate circles, half-circles, figure eights, and serpentines to develop suppleness and straightness.
Demonstrate a free walk on a long rein, returning to a walk on contact.
Demonstrate a stretching trot circle.
Demonstrate a halt and stand quietly for five seconds.
Ride mount without stirrups at all gaits.
Discuss aids for and demonstrate a rein-back of 2-3 steps.
Move mount away from leg laterally.
Develop a hand gallop from a canter and return to canter smoothly.
Discuss performance with examiner including the rider’s position, and whether mount was moving forward in balance and rhythm.

Riding Over Fences
Ride over fences using Riding Test Expectations.
Discuss reasons for adjusting stirrups for different types of work.
Perform simple gymnastic grid exercises set at appropriate distances for mount’s stride at trot, finishing with an ascending oxer set at 3’. Fences not to exceed 3’.
Develop a plan of how to ride a hunter seat equitation course.
Course to consist of 8-10 jumps. The majority of fences should be set at, but not exceed, 3’.
Ride course according to plan.
Discuss performance with Examiner, including rhythm maintained throughout the course.

Riding in the Open
Ride in a group at the walk, trot, and canter on a suitable mount.
Discuss performance with Examiner, including reasons for any disobedience.

Horse Management Expectations
The candidate should show a solid awareness of cause and effect in horse management skills. Assistance/supervision is allowed in the demonstrations of bandaging, longeing, and loading mount.

Turn Out/Tack
Attire to be correct for Hunter Seat Equitation. Pony Club pin.
Long hair neatly up or back. No inappropriate jewelry. Boots polished and in good repair. Spurs (if used) polished and put on properly.
Mount to be thoroughly groomed, reflecting regular care with a healthy coat; no sweat or dirt. Mane and tail brushed with no dandruff. Sheath or udder showing regular attention. Feet picked out and reflecting regular farrier care. Eyes, nose, lips, dock clean.
Tack to be safe, clean and properly adjusted, reflecting regular care/conditioning with metal polished. No jockeys or dust, no cracked leather, and all stress points clean.
Explain reasons for equipment used on own mount for flat work and over fences.
Demonstrate proper adjustment and reason for tack used on mount.

Conditioning
Present a written outline on how to condition and feed a mount that has been out of work for 30 days in preparation for a specific competition.
Measure and record pulse, temperature and respiration of own pony at rest in front of Examiner.
Know vital signs of own mount at work.

Nutrition
Describe own mount’s ration when developing fitness, maintaining fitness, taking day off, sick, roughed out.

Stable Management
Describe caring for a mount efficiently and economically when:
Stabled - feed and water schedule, minerals needed, clothing, exercise, grooming.
At grass - safety check of pasture, fencing, water, mineral supply, shelter, feed, and grooming.
Discuss knowledge of safety measures, preparation and care of mount and equipment on day of strenuous work, including feeding schedule, consideration of mount’s condition, consideration of climate and terrain, cooling out, treatment of any injuries, and making mount comfortable.  
Discuss pasture safety and fencing  
Name three toxic plants in your area and describe appearance.  

**Pony Parts, Conformation & Lameness**  
Name five basic conformation qualities that you want in a mount for your own use, and how they affect the basic movement and soundness (i.e., sloping shoulder means longer stride).  
Name and locate on a mount the following unsoundnesses: ringbone, curb, bowed tendons, sidebone, spavin, navicular, splint, thoroughpin, sprains.  

**Travel Safety**  
Be able to load and unload, with assistance, an experienced, cooperative mount.  

**Record Book**  
Record Book (health, maintenance, immunizations) must be kept up to date and brought to test. Must have records for at least 9 months prior to test. Records should reflect appropriate depth of knowledge for this level.  

**Health Care & Veterinary Knowledge**  
List annual immunizations and health requirements appropriate for your area.  
List prevalent internal parasites in your area.  
Describe routine parasite prevention for your mount.  
Describe how tetanus and strangles are transmitted.  
Explain the need for the regular care of teeth.  

**Teaching**  
Demonstrate knowledge of safe grooming, handling and tacking up by assisting a D-1 or D-2 to prepare for turnout under direct supervision of Examiner. Explain to the D member what the appropriate steps are and what safety procedures should be followed. Assess turnout and equipment for safety and explain to the D member any safety concerns and how to fix them.  
Candidate must bring a letter from DC that they are assisting in simple unmounted instructional programs for D-level Pony Club members with supervision.  

**Land Conservation**  
Name the zoning requirements for the county in which you keep your horse. *Example: A minimum of 10 acres is required to keep one horse.*  
Know what public land is available to ride on in your county.  

**Longeing**  
Longe own mount for exercise in an enclosed area with assistance.  
Discuss methods, equipment, and safety precautions for longeing.  

**Foot & Shoeing**  
Recognize and describe good and bad shoeing.  

**Bandaging**  
Apply a shipping and stable bandage, under supervision of examiner, and give reasons for use.
INFORMATION FOR C-1/C-2 LEVEL CANDIDATES

Requirements for All Candidates

• Be a Pony Club Member in Good Standing, as defined by club policy, having paid local, regional and national dues and fees.
• C-1 and C-2: Be a member of Pony Club for at least 3 months.
• Attain each rating before next level is attempted.
• Have a thorough knowledge of requirements of the level being tested and be able to discuss and/or demonstrate any requirements from all previously attained standards.
• Candidate must be tested on and pass all sections of the test and in the appropriate area/arena/open terrain before being awarded the new Rating.
• Any special testing requests including exceptions or exemptions must be submitted to the USPC National Office, through the DC. These requests will be reviewed on an individual basis and the final decision for any exception will be the responsibility of the D-1 through C-2 Program Committee Chair and the Vice President of Instruction.

Attire

Safe, workmanlike attire, including proper footwear, must be worn in the barn area and when working around mounts. Correct formal or informal attire will be worn for formal inspection and presentation of mount at rating. Refer to the USPC Horse Management Handbook, section on Attire, and the USPC Manual of Horsemanship I and II. ASTM/SEI approved headgear with full harness and with chin strap in place must be worn at formal inspection, when mounted and when longeig.

Equipment

Saddlery and bitting for USPC Testing should comply with the HSE section of current USEF rulebook.

Testing Information (C-1 and C-2)

Testings may be held more often if practical for the club, but must be offered a minimum of twice a year. Testing dates are determined by the DC(s). By networking with other clubs within the Region to establish group ratings with other clubs, increased opportunities to rate can be made available to members.

A testing is designed to and should be conducted in one day if possible, or, if due to unforeseen circumstances such as weather or footing, it is not possible to complete a test in one day, all sections must be tested/completed within a one-month period.

A testing shall be an instructional, working session, covering only requirements listed in the Standards but must not become a “lesson” on each section.

Oral testing or demonstration is required for all parts of the horse management phases. Written tests are not allowed.

Upon recommendation of the Examiner only, a candidate who does not meet standards on not more than one-third of tested sections may be retested within one month on only the requirements not passed including riding sections (D-1 through C-2).

There is no set time limit between taking any of the C-level tests, but each level is attained at a separate testing, and rating levels may not be skipped.

Sharing of mounts for the C-level testings is not allowed.

Appropriate Horse

It is the responsibility of the candidate and his/her parent(s) or guardian to bring an appropriate mount(s) to the testing. The conditioned mount(s) must be capable of completing the flat, longeig and jumping phases at the heights indicated at the appropriate skill levels. Embracing USPC’s commitment to safety for all horses and riders is of the utmost importance. Failing to follow these guidelines will make it difficult for the candidate to meet the standard on that given day.

Presentation of Mount for Inspection

Braiding is optional.

All tack must be clean, show regular care and suppleness, and be well adjusted, and in good repair.

Stand by mount, on near side, with Examiner, facing rear, reins in left hand below bit, slack in right, changing sides with Examiner.

Examiners (D-1 through C-2)

D-1 through C-2 Examiners are chosen by the DC(s).

Examiners should be selected with care, should be completely knowledgeable of the Standards of Proficiency at the level(s) they are testing, as well as the level(s) above and below the one(s) they are testing.

Examiners should be familiar with the Standards D through A. Examiners should be sensitive to young people and conduct the test in an educational framework.

Examiners must be furnished a copy of all the USPC Standards, test, and study guides prior to testing.

The Examiners must set the tone of the testing as a teaching situation, making every effort to draw the best from each candidate, without allowing the test to become a lesson on the skill in question.

Care should be taken throughout a testing to encourage the candidates to express what they know, rather than what the Examiner knows.

Examiners should bear in mind that there may be a range from adequate to superior, and anyone within that range, i.e. that meets Standard or better, should pass.

Refer to the current D-1 through C-2 testing guidelines, test organizers guide, and the USPC Examiners Handbook, available online at www.ponyclub.org under Forms and Publications.
Over Fences

C-1 Level

a. Gymnastic Jumping Exercises
   Use at least 3 trot poles placed at 3’6” to 4’6” apart, according to mount’s size. You might need to set different distances inside the gymnastic line as well.

b. Course work: 8 to 10 fences. Set the majority at 2’9”. Course should include related distances, one combination, verticals, and ramped oxers.
Over Fences

C-2 Level

a. Gymnastic Jumping Exercises
   Use at least 3 trot poles placed at 3’6” to 4’6” apart, according to mount’s size. You might need to set different distances inside the gymnastic line as well.

b. Course work: 8 to 10 fences. Set the majority at 3’. Course should include related distances, 1 combination, verticals and ramped oxers.