

Badges + Competition

This is where the education at home becomes measurable, official, and connected to the larger UDJC system.

Badges are not participation awards. They are the gates between the educational levels. Badge Shows give students a nearby place to demonstrate that education under an independent UDJC judge while also learning how recognized competition works.

THE BASIC IDEA

Teach the level at home. Prepare the complete student. Let an independent judge evaluate the required riding and horsemanship. Pass the Badge when the education is ready. Then move forward.

BADGES CONTROL PROGRESSION

A rider does not move because they have spent enough months in a level, because a parent asks, or because the next group is convenient. The lesson trainer and Head Trainer decide when the complete education is ready to be tested.

- Every required Badge component uses a 7.0 passing standard.
- The complete Badge is passed at the same Badge Show under the current test procedure.
- If one required component is not passed, the student returns to the curriculum and repeats the complete Badge when ready.
- The judge owns the official score. Trainer feedback is used to create the next training plan.

STUDENTS DO NOT TEST AT EVERY SHOW

A Badge Show is part of the regular educational rhythm, not only an exam day. Students can attend the clinic, ride appropriate classes, receive judge feedback, and gain show experience even when they are not ready to attempt the next Badge.

FAILURE IS NOT THE PROBLEM

A student who is not ready yet simply returns to training. Moving an unready rider into the next level is the bigger problem.

What the Badges Mean

The exact current Badge sheets control the test. Trainers should always prepare from the official material. The overview below explains what each Badge does inside the pathway.

UNICORN BADGE | UNICORN > LEVEL B

Confirms that the young child has completed the age-appropriate Unicorn foundation and is ready to leave Playtime-style education for more structured Level B lunge-line work. Riding, handling, and simple horse knowledge are evaluated at the level appropriate to the child.

The Unicorn students ride a Lunge Line Test and the judge asks them a few simple theory questions.

B BADGE | LEVEL B > LEVEL E

Confirms that the beginner foundation is secure enough for the rider to enter the group-lesson pathway. The current B test evaluates the required riding and horsemanship/theory standard. The rider shows in a Level B Walk/Trot Test and has to pass an oral theory test.

E BADGE | LEVEL E > LEVEL A

This is a major gate. The current E Badge includes E Ability Dressage, E* Style Jumping at 0.60 m, and the required theory/horsemanship assessment. Each required component must meet the 7.0 standard. Passing opens Level A and establishes the rider in the wider performance pathway.

A BADGE | ADVANCED SCHOOL PATHWAY

The current A Badge includes A Ability Dressage, A* Style Jumping at 0.80 m, and the required theory/horsemanship assessment. Each required component must meet the 7.0 standard. It confirms a much more complete riding-school education and advances the rider deeper into the UDJC performance system.

BADGE READINESS IS A TRAINING DECISION

The lesson trainer and Head Trainer approve readiness together. Do not enter a student because the family already paid for the weekend or because everybody in the friend group is testing. Enter the student when the complete Badge is genuinely ready.

- Prepare the whole Badge, not one favorite component.
- Use score sheets and judge feedback as part of the teaching system.
- Do not promise families a completion date for a level.

The Badge Show

A Badge Show is the official in-house event that makes the Certified Riding School system real.

It is familiar enough for the first-time student and official enough that the scores, results, points, Badges, and applicable Championship qualifiers matter in the national system.

CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENT

Every UDJC Certified Riding School hosts at least THREE Badge Shows in each twelve-month certification period. FOUR are recommended because a quarterly rhythm gives students regular goals and makes a missed or failed Badge easier to recover from without rushing.

TWO CONSECUTIVE DAYS

Day 1: Clinic + Education

The UDJC judge works with riders and trainers. Sessions may include small groups, private work, Badge preparation, problem solving, and trainer education. The judge also gets to see the school, horses, staff, instruction, safety, and general operation as part of the certification relationship.

Day 2: Recognized Competition + Badges

The school runs an official recognized UDJC show appropriate to its students and facility. The day can include Dressage, Jumping, Hunters, Young Horse classes, special classes, and official Badge components. Entries and results flow through UDJC Show Manager.

WHO PARTICIPATES?

- Unicorn participation is strongly recommended in an age-appropriate format.
- Level B, E, and A UDJC students should participate unless specifically excused by the Head Trainer.
- Students do not need to attempt a new Badge at every event.
- Outside riders and trainers may participate when the facility can accommodate them safely.

THIS IS NOT A CASUAL SCHOOLING DAY

A Badge Show uses official memberships or registrations, entries, waivers, class specifications, judging, scores, results, records, ribbons, Badges, and certificates. The event may be smaller than a Circuit Show, but the integrity of the result is the same.

From the Riding School to the National System

COMPETITION SHOULD REINFORCE THE CURRICULUM

The point of showing is not to teach one thing at home and reward something completely different on the weekend. A student should take the same balance, control, correct riding, horsemanship, responsibility, and respect for the horse into the show ring.

- Judge feedback becomes part of the next training plan.
- Showing should make the curriculum more concrete, not replace weeks of correct training with endless course practice.
- Students learn preparation, sportsmanship, handling nerves, caring for the horse away from home, and accepting an official result.

BADGE SHOWS CAN LEAD TO OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS

Official results at Badge Shows can count toward the Open Championship pathway where the class is eligible. Open qualification belongs to the rider and may be earned at Badge Shows, Foundation Shows, and Circuit Shows.

IMPORTANT DISTINCTION

Elite Youth and Young Horse Championship qualifiers are earned at Circuit Shows only. A Badge Show may offer Young Horse classes and record official results and applicable points, but it does not create a Young Horse Championship qualifier.

PERFORMANCE LEVELS + SHOW MANAGER

As riders enter the wider competition system, UDJC Show Manager becomes the official record for entries, results, Performance Levels, eligibility, points, rankings, and Championship qualification. The software is designed to handle the technical eligibility rules so the trainer does not need to memorize every combination.

- Badges describe educational progression through the Riding School pathway.
- Performance Levels describe the rider's development inside recognized competition.
- Championship qualification rewards consistent results over time.
- Ranking Protection helps keep developmental competition useful when more advanced riders enter lower classes.

DO NOT RUSH THE PERFORMANCE PATH

The goal is not to get every child to a Championship as fast as possible. The goal is to build a rider whose education is strong enough that competition becomes a natural extension of what the school already teaches.

Your Step 5 Assignment

Now create the calendar that will give your students real goals throughout the year.

WHAT TO DO NOW

PUT YOUR BADGE SHOW CALENDAR IN PLACE

Your school does not need to finish planning every detail today. It does need real dates and a first event that has started moving.

- Choose at least THREE Badge Show weekends for the next twelve months. FOUR are recommended.
- Make sure each Badge Show is planned as two consecutive days: clinic/education first, recognized competition and Badges second.
- Put the dates on the school calendar now so families and trainers can plan around them.
- Choose which of those dates will be your FIRST Badge Show.
- Identify the person at your school who will be responsible for organizing the event.
- Begin the first show in UDJC Show Manager and review the class and pricing options available in the system.
- Start the process of securing the appropriate UDJC judge for the first event.
- Review your Step 1 student list and estimate how many Unicorn, B, E, and A students are likely to participate at the first show.
- Do not decide yet that every student must attempt a Badge. Identify likely Badge candidates separately from students who will simply clinic and compete.
- Make sure your trainers understand that Badge readiness is approved by the lesson trainer and Head Trainer, not by the calendar or the parent.
- Tell your team that the first Badge Show is now part of the launch plan and begin preparing students through the normal curriculum.

IMPORTANT: Do not wait until students look badge-ready before choosing dates. The calendar creates the educational rhythm. Students can attend, learn, and compete without attempting a new Badge at every show.

TASK COMPLETE? CONTINUE TO STEP 6: PREPARE PARENTS + LAUNCH

www.udjc.org/crs6