

Perfected Dressage Method

P D M I N T R O D U C T I O N

Pink Queens Legacy

Brief PDM Introduction Lesson Plan Topics

This introduction lesson plan is designed to be completed within one lesson, and therefore it only focuses on the main methods and topics of the PDM, it does *not* cover all of the PDM. During the brief introduction, the commander will use *demonstrations and exercises* to teach each method, allowing the riders to see the methods visually and to practice the methods themselves.

Perfected Dressage Method
All PDM Links

Lesson Plan Topics

1. **Computer Setup** CH.3
2. **Dressage Basics** CH.1 & CH.2 & CH.12
3. **Screen Delay** CH.4
4. **Sand Lines** CH.5 & CH.6
5. **Meter System** CH.6 & CH.7
6. **Circles** CH.7
7. **Gaps** CH.10
8. **Straightness** CH.13 & CH.15
9. **Corners** CH.14
10. **Alignments** CH.11
11. **Transitional Timing** CH.16

1. Computer Setup CH.3

Mobile vs PC

Riders are encouraged not to use mobile for dressage. Unfortunately, there is too much of a difference between SSO on mobile and SSO on a computer, and so riders are encouraged to **avoid using mobile and instead use a computer/laptop for dressage**. There is a clear difference in performance when comparing riders who are using mobile versus riders who are using a computer, performance *improves greatly* when riders are using a computer.

Keyboard & Mouse

Riders are encouraged to use a **keyboard and mouse** to control their horse if possible, not the arrow keys or a trackpad. Riders will place their **left hand on WASD** and their **right hand on the mouse**. This setup is the *most efficient setup for gaming* as it allows for natural and comfortable positioning of the arms and allows the riders to be able to use their keys and mouse easily and effectively (**key dexterity**).

Extended Camera View

Extended camera view allows for *more visibility*. The riders can better see themselves, the rider line, their partners, straightness, markers, original sand line, arena letters, and more. **When using the original SSO camera view**, the riders *can't* even see their own original sand line when curling; therefore, it is important for riders to **extend their camera in SSO settings**. It is recommend to be at least halfway to the right on the “Distance - Horse” and “Field of View” toggles.

Camera Use

Riders are encouraged to ***constantly* use their camera** and to *never* let the camera sit unused. Using the mouse with their right hand allows the rider to easily maneuver the camera as needed during performance.

Lag Tips & Prevention

LAG TIPS - PQL

2. Dressage Basics CH.1 & CH.2 & CH.12

some/all topics may be skipped

Happy Horse

It is strongly recommended that dressage clubs have a set requirement regarding **happy and maxed horses**. If the rider line has varying horse levels and happiness, this can greatly affect the rider line's speed, agility, gaps, alignments and more. Within dressage, having maxed and happy horses is very important for the success of the routine. Sad horses will always go at the back of the line, as their speed and agility are reduced greatly.

Effect Factor

Within dressage, **everything effects everything**. Everything in dressage works together and therefore every aspect of dressage impacts each other. This is incredibly important to keep in mind.

Always use Bright Dots

Whenever you enter the Riding Arena for dressage practice, always click on the rake by the entrance, as this will turn on the bright dots!

Character Spacing

Character spacing refers to an SSO character-sized gap/distance (an SSO character can fit into the "space"). Character spacing is often referenced throughout the PDM as it is used as a measurement tool. It is commonly used for halt sets, sand line distances, gaps, etc.

Arena Timing

Arena timing refers to different rider lines or partners being synced in timing and reaching markers at the same time on the Commander's screen.

Good arena timing would mean that two rider lines or partners are meeting a center point or opposing markers at the *same time* on the Commander's screen.

Late arena timing would mean the two rider lines or partners are ***not*** meeting the center point or opposing markers at the same time on the Commander's screen.

Recovery & Mistakes

Recovery is an essential part of dressage. Recovery refers to the rider's ability to calmly, smoothly, and effectively fix mistakes by using adjustments, awareness, anticipation, and corrections - *without the aid of the commander*.

If you as a rider make a mistake, keep moving forward and adjust accordingly. Do not halt and do not panic, instead, use your best judgement and try to determine the best way to recover from the mistake and rejoin the rider line. **The basic rule of thumb regarding other riders' mistakes is:** do not follow other riders into their mistakes - do not let their mistakes become yours too.

Regardless of skill, experience, and knowledge, every rider will make mistakes at some point. Mistakes are simply a part of dressage; it is natural and common to make mistakes as we are all human at the end of the day. Mistakes happen and that is OK! Keep calm and continue forward, mistakes do not define you as a dressage rider - instead, how you recover from that mistake is what defines you as a skilled rider!

3. Screen Delay CH.4

What is Screen Delay

Screen delay affects every aspect of dressage. Screen delay is the delay in SSO servers outputting information from other screens to yours.

There are three fundamental rules for screen delay:
1. You will see everyone on SSO in a delay.
2. Everyone on SSO will see you in a delay.
3. You can not see your own delay.

Screen Delay Spacings

Screen delay varies depending on the speed of the rider. The faster a rider is going: *the greater the screen delay difference.*

Walk: Around half of a horse length + character spacing difference.
At a walk, the delay is half a horse length + character spacing difference. On your own screen, you will see yourself half of a horse + CS ahead of where everyone else sees you on their own screen.

Trot: Around one horse length + character spacing difference.
At a trot, the delay is a full horse length + character spacing difference. On your own screen, you will see yourself a horse length + CS ahead of where everyone else sees you on their own screen.

Canter: Around two horse lengths + character spacing difference.
At a canter, the delay is two horse lengths + character spacing difference. On your own screen, you will see yourself two horse lengths + CS ahead of where everyone else sees you on their own screen.

4. Sand Lines CH.5 & CH.6

Spacing & Dots

Bright dot refers to the lighter-coloured circles of sand on the arena floor. **Spacing** refers to the middle point between two bright dots. All of the common sand lines and metered sand lines use bright dots and spacings.

Spacings and **spacing lines** do not have a definitive visual marker, unlike bright dots and bright dot sand lines. Depending on where you are in the arena, the spacing line could be a pebble line or other times a line of faded dots, or it may not have any visual markers.

Spacing refers to one marker that is directly between two bright dots.

Spacing line refers to an entire sand line that falls directly between two dotted sand lines. Spacing lines stretch the entire length/width of the arena.

Center & Mid Line

Center line refers to the long bright dotted sand line from A to C wall and midline refers to the shorter bright dotted line from E to B wall.

These two sand lines are the primary sand lines of the arena and both pass through X. Center and midline are two different sand lines and are ***not*** the same thing.

X is the bright sand dot that is located in the exact center of the arena.

Common Sand Lines

Center line
Mid line
Wall lines
Tight Tier
Normal Tier
Dye lines

5. Meter System CH.6 & CH.7

Meter System Intro

The meter system is a series of numbers that measure distance. The meter system is used for naming specific sand lines and circles. There are metered sand lines AND metered circles.

There are three fundamental rules to meters:
1. Meters use two specific markers: bright dots and spacings
2. Meters have two specific sizes: whole meter (5) and point 5 meter (2.5)
3. Whole meters use bright dots and point 5 meters use spacings.

There are 8 meter sizes total: 4 whole meter and 4 point five meter.
2.5 - 5 - 7.5 - 10 - 12.5 - 15 - 17.5 - 20

Sand Line Distance (5m 2.5m)

Every bright dot or bright dot line is 5 meters apart.
Every spacing or spacing line is 5 meters apart.
From a spacing to a bright dot, or vice versa, is 2.5 meters.
5 meters uses bright dots, and 2.5 meters uses spacings.

A walk curl-over is equivalent to a character spacing; if a rider is on a sand line and does a walk curl-over, they will end up a character distance away from their original sand line. A character spacing is equivalent to the distance from one pebble line to the next.

A trot curl-over is equivalent to 2.5 meters; if a rider is on a bright dotted sand line and does a trot curl-over they will end up directly between 2 dotted lines on a spacing line (or vice versa).

A canter curl-over is equivalent to 5 meters; if a rider is on a bright dotted sand line and does a canter curl-over they will end up on the next dotted line over. Or, if a rider is on a spacing line and does a canter curl-over they will end up on the next spacing line over.

Counting Method

Metered sand lines and metered circles can be found by using the counting method. This method is based on counting a certain number of bright dots or spacings away from X.

To do this, stand on X facing center or mid-line, and count a certain number of bright dot lines or spacing lines away from X toward one of the four walls of the arena.

2.5 Meter: Count 1 spacing from X.
5 Meter: Count 1 bright dot from X.
10 Meter: Count 2 bright dots from X.
7.5 Meter: Count 2 spacings from X.
15 Meter: Count 3 bright dots from X.
12.5 Meter: Count 3 spacings from X.
17.5 Meter: Count 4 spacings from X.
20 Meter: Count 4 bright dots from X.

6. Circles CH.7

Circle Gaps

To adjust gaps on a circle, the riders will change their tapping speed instead of using typical gap adjustments, like walking or cantering. While riding a circle, the riders gently tap their "inside key" in a smooth rhythmic pattern and to adjust gaps they will gently tap faster or slower to either catch up or slow down.

When a rider taps their directional key faster, this will cause their horse to make a slightly smaller circle and therefore their horse's head is placed to the inside of the rider ahead. In doing this, the rider will begin to get closer to the rider ahead of them.

When a rider taps their directional key slower, this will cause their horse to make a **slightly larger circle** and therefore their horse's head is placed to the outside of the rider ahead of them. In doing this, the rider will begin to create **more space** from the rider ahead of them.

7. Gaps CH.10

Gap Sizes

Half Horse: Used for split lines.

Nose-to-Tail: used for line up.
Back-of-Saddle: used for walking.
Halfway Inside: primary gap in PQL/PDM.
Fully Inside: primary gap in PQL/PDM.

PQL's primary gap size is the **Gap Window**, which is a combination of **Halfway Inside and Fully Inside**.
The gap window allows for the riders to be Halfway Inside, Fully Inside, or somewhere between the two gaps. It relieves stress for the riders, as they do not have to constantly adjust to an exact gap size and instead, they have more freedom to focus on other aspects of their dressage.

Gap Corrections

The main goal of gap corrections is for the adjustment to be as minimal as possible so that attention is not drawn to the adjustment during performances. All corrections, adjustments, and recovery should be done as gently as possible so that it is nearly invisible.

Do not adjust gaps during belts, merging, L-corners, and after “pre” is called. If the riders adjust during these moments, it could negatively affect a number of different aspects, such as go timing, arena timing, straightness, etc.

Types of gap corrections:
Wiggling
Mini Walk Steps
Mini Trot Steps
Mini Canter Steps
Mini Extended Canter Hops
Horseshoes

Gap Anticipation

Gap anticipation is key in dressage. Riders will use gap anticipation to decide when, how, and if they should adjust their gaps. Using gap anticipation prevents riders from fixing their gaps when it is not needed.

Gap Anticipation: Understanding how other riders' gaps and corrections may affect your own gap. Gap anticipation refers to the riders being aware of the other rider's

gap sizes and gap corrections, and using the information to make adjustments as needed based on the other rider's actions and gaps.

Split Line Gaps

When in split lines, or whenever the rider line is going to merge, they will keep a gap size that matches the original gap size.

For example, if the rider line was using **Halfway Inside** gaps, during split lines they will use **Half Horse** gaps - if the rider line splits from Halfway Inside they will end up in Half Horse, if they merge from Half Horse they will end up in Halfway Inside.

8. Straightness CH.13 & CH.15

Leave Keys Alone

While moving in a straight line, riders are encouraged to **avoid excessively touching their directional keys**, as this can be a common habit in dressage. Horses only do what the rider asks of them, and so a horse will not veer on its own. To avoid veering, riders should only gently tap their keys and only when needed.

Riders should **never hold down their directional keys** (turning keys) as this will result in harsh wiggling and veering. Riders should only gently and lightly tap their directional keys when needed, unless making a turn or performing a move.

Follow The Sand Lines

Every rider should base their straightness on the sand lines that they are riding on, *not* the rider ahead of them. If each rider in line bases their straightness off of the sand lines and not the other riders, this will prevent the entire rider line from wiggling or veering. Sand lines, letters, and markers can be used to help ensure the rider is straight and not veering or wiggling throughout their performance.

If the rider ahead veers, the other riders are encouraged to not follow that rider into the veer and instead continue straight on their sand line. This method can also be used for alignments if another rider veers into a rider - the rider should not veer away and continue straight.

Anchors (Merging & Splitting)

All merges and splits are performed using a specified sand line as the **anchor** for merging and splitting. The riders should never base the merge/split off of the rider ahead of them, they should always base the merge/split off of the anchor point.

When belting, merging, splitting, etc. all riders in line will merge/split/belt once their **horse's nose has reached the anchor**. When each rider uses the same anchor point, gaps, line order, alignment, and arena timing will not be negatively affected. Riders will not adjust nor tap through merges and splits, instead, they will L-Corner (hold down their turning key until straight onto the new sand line).

9. Corners CH.14

L-Corners & J-Corners

There are **two methods** that riders use to make turns and ride around corners. The universal method is called **J-Corner**, where the riders make a rounded-tapping turn through the corner. This type of corner is not recommended, as it can negatively affect arena timing, gaps, alignments, and straightness.

L-Corners are a **90-degree turn** through a corner or when turning onto a new sand line. The rider will hold down their directional key once their horse's nose has reached the new sand line they wish to turn onto and then release once straight. L-Corners is the method the PDM uses for any type of turn.

L-Corner Gaits

There are 3 main variances of L-Corners: walk, trot, and canter L-Corners. Each gait turns at a different distance. Canter turns are wider than trot turns, trot turns are wider than walk turns. Due to each gait having a different width of turn, there are different times at which a rider should begin the L-Corner.

Walk L-Corner: *begin* holding down the directional key once the horse's nose is directly overtop of the sand line you wish to turn onto.

Trot L-Corner: *begin* holding down the directional key once the horse's nose has reached the sand line you wish to turn onto.

Canter L-Corner: *begin* holding down the directional key once the horse's nose is a character spacing away from the sand line you wish to turn onto.

10. Alignments CH.11

Comb Alignment

Comb alignment is used any time two or more riders are side-by-side.

1. Base comb alignment off of the line leader.
2. Ensure you are straight and not veering.
3. Constantly check alignment and adjust as needed.
4. Always merge towards leader once reaching wall/marker.
5. You should be ahead of everyone else on your own screen.

Walk Comb: each rider will have the line leader BOS + CS to them; the leader's nose a character spacing away from their saddle (AKA lead's nose over their horse's rump).

Trot Comb: each rider will be a character spacing ahead of the line leader's nose.

Canter Comb: each rider will be one full horse length + character spacing ahead of the line leader.

Staggered (Split & Slant)

Staggered Alignment is used for formations where the riders are spaced apart and not directly across from each other, such as waterfalls, slants, and specific split lines. Within staggered alignment, **there are two subcategories: Split Staggered and Slant Staggered**.

Split Staggered is used for waterfalls and split lines that will remerge.

1. Base alignment off of partner.
2. Partner is the rider ahead and across from you.
3. Ensure you are straight and not veering.
4. Constantly check alignment and adjust as needed.

When riding in split staggered alignment, you will stay halfway inside (or whatever your original gap size was) to the rider ahead and across from you. Your partner is the rider who was originally in front of you during the original line up (before you waterfalled). During split staggered, keep your hands to the back of your partner's saddle.

Slant Staggered is used for forward and back slants.

1. Base alignment off of partner.

2. Partner depends on type of slant.
3. In back slant, partner is the rider who was originally behind you.
4. In forward slant, partner is the rider who was originally in front of you.
5. In back slant, maintain gap to partner.
6. In forward slant, have partner maintain gap to you.
7. Ensure you are straight and not veering.
8. Constantly check alignment and adjust as needed.

When riding in slant staggered alignment in a FORWARD slant, place your partner's hands at the back of your saddle (partner is HI to you, or whichever gap you were originally using). When turning onto a slant from HI gaps, this is the natural alignment that you will be placed into.

When riding in slant staggered alignment in a BACK slant, place your hands to the back of the saddle of your partner (you are HI to your partner, or whichever gap you were originally using). When turning onto a back slant from HI gaps, this is the natural alignment that you will end up in.

Tier Alignment

Tier alignment is used when there are two or more rider lines next to each other or for split lines that are maintaining *arena timing*.

1. Base alignment off of partner.
2. Partner is the rider who is next to you.
3. Odds partner will be the rider who was originally behind them.
4. Evens partner will be the rider who was originally in front of them.
5. Maintain comb alignment with partner.
6. Maintain half horse gaps with the rider in front of you.
7. Ensure you are straight and not veering.
8. Constantly check alignment and adjust as needed.

When riding **tier alignment**, you will be in **comb alignment** with your partner - the rider next to you from the other rider line. You will also keep **half-horse gaps** with the rider directly in front of you.

11. Transitional Timing CH.16

Transitional Timing

Transitional timing consists of **5** methods that are used to complete specific moves without the use of multiple go's. In moves that have a transition, such as gait changes, directional changes, or partner moves, the riders will use a specific type of transitional timing to perform the transition, rather than the commander calling go.

Gait Timing

Gait Transitional Timing is used by riders whenever they change gaits in a dressage move. Instead of the Commander calling go for the gait change, the riders will do it themselves once they've reached a specific point during the move.

To change gait in a dressage move, the rider will change their gait once their horse's belly is directly overtop of their original axis (aka original sand line - typically where the rider first started the move).

When gait timing is performed correctly, the rider will *not* cross over their original sand line to the opposite side. Once completing the move, the rider should exit onto their original sand line straight, and not to either side of the line (the rider should complete the move at the same place where they started the move).

Directional Timing

Directional Transitional Timing is used by riders whenever they change direction in a dressage move. Instead of the Commander calling go for the direction change, the riders will do it themselves once they've reached a specific point during the move.

To change direction in a dressage move, the rider will change direction once they are straight in orientation - all four of their horse's hooves are straight over their original sand line (if the move changes sand lines: change direction once the horse is straight in orientation - aka straight in relation to the arena walls or any related positional markers).

When directional timing is performed correctly, the rider will slightly move forward on their axis during the direction change. Once completing the move, the rider should exit onto their original sand line (or a new sand line if the move changes the rider's sand line) straight and not to either side of the line.

Combined Timing

Combined Transitional Timing is used by riders whenever they change gait and direction during the same point in a dressage move. Instead of the Commander calling go for the gait and direction change, the riders will do it themselves once they've reached a specific point during the move.

To change gait and direction in a dressage move, the rider will change their gait once they are straight in orientation and then quickly change direction. This will happen in one smooth and quick motion: gait then direction.

When combined timing is performed correctly, the rider will slightly move forward on their axis during the direction change and they should exit the move straight on their original sand line (or new sand line), *not* on either side of the line.

Passing Timing

Passing Transitional Timing (also known as partner timing) is used by riders during partner moves. Instead of the Commander calling go for the partner move (which can be very difficult due to screen delay), the riders will do the move themselves once they've reached their partner.

There are 3 types of passing timing:
Nose-to-nose
Nose-to-tail
Curved passing timing

Nose-to-nose passing timing: The riders will begin the move called once their horse's nose is in line with their partner's horse's nose.

Nose-to-tail passing timing: The riders will begin the move called once their horse's nose is in line with their partner's horse's tail.

Curved passing timing (used for circle or shape partner moves): The riders will perform the nose-to-nose partner move when they are half of a horse length away from their partner's nose.

Marker Timing

Marker Transitional Timing is used for any move that is based on markers instead of go's. Any dressage move can use maker timing; instead of the Commander calling

go for a move, the riders will do the move themselves once they've reached the specified marker (sand lines, bright dots, spacings, letters, crosshairs, etc.).

There are 3 types of marker timing:
Nose-to-marker
Hooves-to-marker
Tail-to-marker

Nose-to-marker timing is used for moves where the rider continues forward or when the rider will turn onto a new sand line after the move, such as L-Corners, splits, merges, cuts, curl comb, etc. **Once the rider's horse's nose reaches the marker specified, they begin the move called.**

Tail-to-marker timing is used for moves where the rider is placed back in space, such as a keyhole. **The rider will perform the move once their horse's tail is overtop of the marker specified.**

Hooves-to-marker timing is used for halt sets and formations or line-ups that use markers. Riders will stand with their front hooves on top of the marker.

2024



Perfected Dressage Method

BRIEF PDM INTRODUCTION

Pink Queens Legacy