



WDAA Equipment and Attire Guide

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENTS

APPOINTMENTS/TACK/BITS	1
Bridle:	1
Illegal bridle equipment	1
Hackamore/Bosal:	1
Bitless Bridles:	2
Western Two-Rein Bridle	3
Reins:	4
Hand position on reins:	5
Saddle:	6
Snaffle Bits:	7
Curb Bits:	8
Curb straps/Curb Chains:	9
Other:	9
Prohibited Equipment:	10
ATTIRE	10
Required apparel:	10
Optional apparel:	10
WARM UP RING/TRAINING AREAS	11
BIT EXAMPLES FOR WESTERN DRESSAGE – LEGAL AND NOT LEGAL	12
Snaffle bits	12
Curb bits	17



WDAA Equipment and Attire Guide

*The purpose of this WDAA Equipment and Attire Guide is to provide explanations and additional information and some visual guides about the appointments (attire and tack) allowed and not allowed under the USEF Western Dressage Division. **In the case of conflicting verbiage, the current USEF WD Rule Book will supersede this document.***

“At Federation Licensed Competitions, the C2 Steward or the person who is under the direction of the Steward and appointed by the competition management will be responsible for overseeing the checking of the horse, tack, and attire. A horse must be eliminated from the test just completed if the horse or any tack and/or attire are in violation of the rules and/or the tongue has been tied. C2 Stewards or Equipment Inspectors are only required to inspect bits and other appointments on a minimum of one-third of the horses in a class. (See WD124).”

At a non-USEF WDAA competition or a USEF Competition Lite, a designated individual must assume the responsibility of overseeing the checking of horses, tack, bits, and attire.

See further information in this document for proper equipment check procedures. Horses with illegal equipment in the warm-up ring will be eliminated from the next class they are entering unless the equipment can be corrected before the scheduled ride time for that entry.

APPOINTMENTS/TACK/BITS

Bridle:

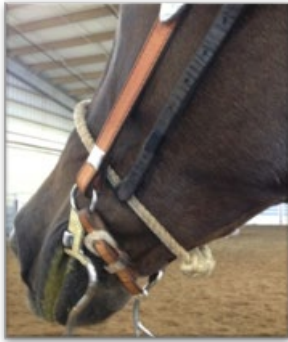
- Any western-type headstall must be used.
- A western cavesson (braided or plain) or pencil bosal with or without a get-down rope with space for two fingers placed between the cavesson and the jowl of the horse is allowed. The inside of the noseband must be smooth and free of any metal, other than the buckle.

Illegal bridle equipment

- Flash, figure-eight or dropped nose bands.
- Mechanical hackamores

Hackamore/Bosal:

- A hackamore (bosal) is permitted on a horse of any age, and at any level. A hackamore includes a bosal, rounded in shape, and constructed of braided rawhide or leather, and must have a flexible non-metallic core attached to a suitable headstall. No other material of any kind is to be used in conjunction with the bosal, i.e. steel, metal, or chains. Bosals may be wrapped with smooth electrical tape to prevent rubbing.



Rope cavesson - NOT LEGAL - Should be smooth. Harsh material is not legal. The knot is not legal.



LEGAL plain or rolled cavesson – smooth on the inside



Pencil bosal - LEGAL



The bosal above illustrates the illegal use of latex, sheepskin, or bandage material.

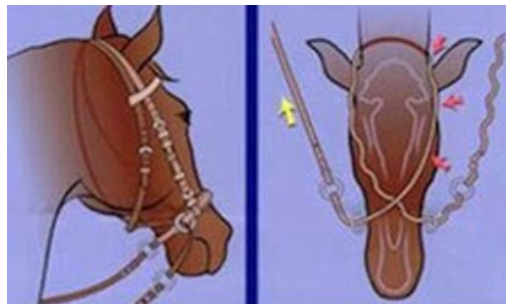


The hackamore pictured above illustrates the legal use of electric tape added to the bosal.

Bitless Bridles:

- A bitless bridle is permitted on a horse of any age at any level.
- All bitless bridles must be of Western style made of flat leather or leather-like materials.
- Cross-under bitless bridle - a simple and subtle two-loop system, one over the poll and one over the nose that embraces the whole of the head.
- No other variations are permissible.
- Bitless bridles with sidepulls are prohibited.

The photo and diagrams to the right illustrate a cross-under bitless bridle



Western Two-Rein Bridle

The Western two-rein bridles like those shown below are permitted.



A two-rein bridle is a bridle and bit, snaffle, or curb ridden over a full or pencil bosal or bosalita. The following are acceptable ways to hold the reins when using a two-rein bridle:

1. The Two-Rein Bridle with Snaffle Bit: The two-rein bridle with SNAFFLE consists of a snaffle bit and a pencil or full bosal or bosalita. When using a snaffle, the rider must ride with two hands whether using a loop rein or split reins. The rider will hold a bosal rein (mecate) and a snaffle rein in each hand as pictured below.



2. The Two-Rein with Curb Bit: The rider has the following choices:

a. Split Reins: When using a CURB BIT with SPLIT REINS and a pencil bosal or bosalita, the rider can ride with all reins in one hand but can only have one finger between the reins OR the rider can ride with a bit rein and a bosal rein in the left hand and a bit rein and bosal rein in the right hand.



b. Romal Reins: When using a curb bit with ROMAL REINS and a pencil bosal or bosalita, the rider has two options:

1. A romal must be held with one hand with the romal coming up from the bottom and out of the top of the hand. The bosal rein can then be held in the opposite hand.
2. A romal and bosal may be ridden in one hand, the reins coming up from the bottom of the hand and out of the top. No fingers can be between the reins.



Note: When using a curb bit as part of the Western two rein bridle, only a pencil bosal or bosalita can be used, not a full bosal.

The end of the mecate, called the tail, can be wrapped around the saddle horn, held by the rider, or slipped under the rider's belt.

Reins:

When the rider uses a snaffle bit, the following reins may be used:

- loop/connected reins
- split reins
- buckled reins
- mecate reins
- romal reins without a popper

Two hands must be used with any of these combinations. Horsehair, rope reins and mecate reins are allowed for bosals and snaffles. The mecate tail can be tied to the saddle horn, held by the rider, or tucked under the rider's belt.

When the rider uses a curb, the following reins may be used:

- romal reins
- split reins
- loop/connected reins
- buckled reins

When using a curb with romal reins, only one hand is allowed; when using other rein choices, one or two hands are allowed.

Mecate reins with snaffle bit



Hand position on reins:

In the case of romal reins, the romal is held in one hand with no fingers between the individual reins.

- The end of the romal may be held in the hand not used for reining to keep the romal from swinging and to adjust the position of the rein. The reins must be held so that there is at least 16" of rein between the hands.
- In the case of when split reins are held in one or two hands, the rider may not switch back and forth (from one handed to two handed) during a test. There are no restrictions on method of holding reins in two hands.

When split reins are held in one hand, there are two ways that the rider may use them.

- The rider may put one finger between the split reins; the ends of the reins fall on the side of the reining hand.
- The rider may hold both reins in one hand without a finger between the reins; the hand must be around the reins. The ends of the split reins may be held in the hand not used for reining to keep them from swinging and to adjust the position of the reins. No finger is allowed between the reins. The reins must be held so that there is at least 16" of rein between the hands.
- In the case of looped/connected reins, buckled reins, the reins are held in one or two hands; the rider must not switch back and forth during a test. (Exception: Freestyle).

At the end of the Free Walk or Free Jog, riders using split reins held in one hand may use the free or offhand to pull the reins back to the desired length. Riders using romal reins may use the hand using the romal to alter the tension or length of the reins from the bridle to the reining hand.

Saddle:

A standard American Western stock saddle with swells, a seat, cantle, skirt, fenders, and Western stirrups is required. A working Western side saddle is also acceptable.

a. Optional and permitted features may include:

1. Horn
2. Padding or pads on the seat of saddle
3. Bucking rolls
4. Tapaderos, except in Western Dressage Equitation

b. The following features and style of saddles are not permitted:

1. Thigh & knee rolls
2. Saddles: Australian, Baroque, English, McClellan, and Spanish

c. Silver equipment will not count over a good working outfit.

d. A breastplate and/or crupper may be used.

WESTERN SADDLE PARTS



Snaffle Bits:

- A snaffle bit may be used on a horse of any age being ridden at any level.
- A snaffle bit offers no leverage or curb action.
- A standard snaffle is a conventional O-ring, egg butt, full cheek (keepers optional) or D-ring, all with rings having an outside diameter no smaller than 2 inches (50.8 mm), nor larger than 4 inches (101.6 mm). The inside of the circumference of the ring must be free of rein, curb or headstall attachments that would provide leverage.

Illustration shows how to measure an O-ring. This ring is too small.

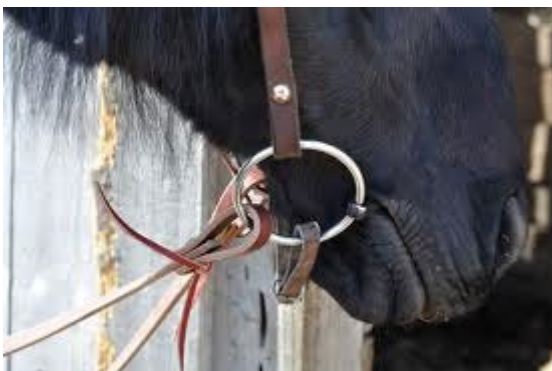


- The bars of the snaffle mouthpiece must be round, oval, or egg-shaped, smooth, and unwrapped, except with latex, and no less than 5/16 inch (7.9 mm) and no more than 3/4 inch (19.05 mm) in diameter measured one inch (25 mm) from the cheek, and may be inlaid, if smooth.



Bars measured 1" from cheek

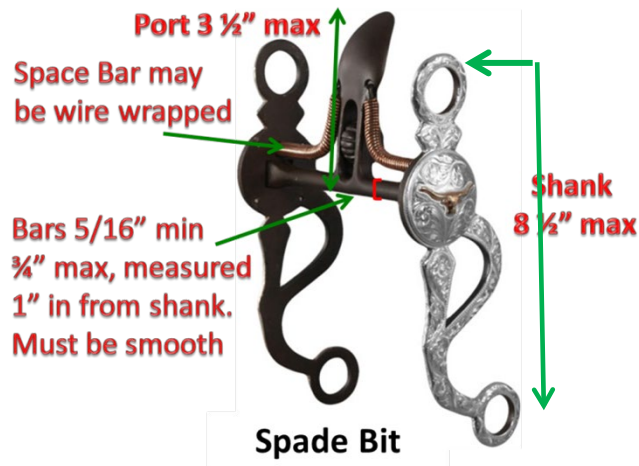
- The mouthpiece may be two or three pieces.
- If a mouthpiece is three pieces, a connecting ring must be no larger than 1¼ inches (31.75 mm) in diameter, or a connecting flat bar must be no longer than 2 inches (50.8 mm) and 3/8 inch (9.5 mm) to ¾ inch (19.05 mm), measured top-to-bottom, and must lie flat in the horse's mouth.
- Any solid mouthpiece or barrel mouthpiece may be used.
- If a bit hobble (may be a curb strap or chain) is used on a snaffle it must be attached below the reins.
- No flat, sharp, slow twist, twisted, or pointed edges on mouthpieces are allowed.



At left is snaffle bit with bit hobble correctly placed below reins.

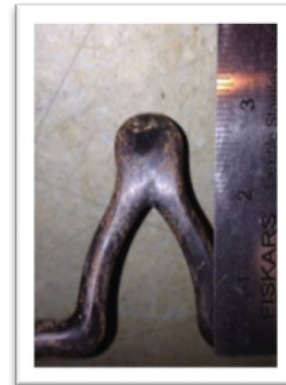
Curb Bits:

There is no discrimination against any standard western bit. A standard western curb bit may be used on a horse of any age being ridden at any level.



8 1/2" (215.9 mm) maximum shank length.

To measure the bit length, use a vertical line from the upper most part of the headstall slot to the point of pull for the rein.



The port must be no higher than 3 1/2 inches

- A standard Western bit is defined as having a shank with a maximum length overall of 8 1/2" (215.9 mm). The mouthpiece will consist of a metal bar 5/16" (7.9 mm) to 3/4" (19.05 mm) in diameter as measured one inch in from the shank.
- The bars may be inlaid but must be smooth or latex wrapped; the bars may be encased in smooth 5/16" (7.9 mm) to 3/4" (19.05 mm) in diameter tubular barrels that rotate around the bars.
- Nothing may protrude above or below the mouthpiece (bar) such as extensions, prongs or rivets designed to intimidate the horse. Rollers attached to the center of the bit are acceptable and may extend below the bar.

- Jointed mouthpieces are acceptable and may consist of two or three pieces and may have one or two joints. A three-piece mouthpiece may include a connecting ring of 1 ¼ inch (31.75 mm) or less in diameter or a connecting flat bar of 3/8 to ¾ inch (9.5mm – 19.05 mm) measured top to bottom with a maximum length of 2" (50 mm), which lies flat in the mouth, or a roller or port as described herein.
- The port must be no higher than 3 ½ inches (88.9 mm) maximum with roller(s) and covers acceptable. Jointed mouthpieces, half-breeds and spade bits are standard. Wire on the braces (above the bars and attaching to the spade) of a traditional spade bit is acceptable.
 - Reins must be attached to each shank.
 - A flat curb chain or leather chin strap must be used with a curb bit. Curb chains or flat leather chin straps must be at least 1/2 inch (12.7 mm) in width and lie flat against the jaw of the horse. No wire, rawhide, metal, or other substance can be used in conjunction with or as part of the flat leather chin strap or curb chain. Round, rolled, braided or rawhide curb straps are prohibited.
 - A slobber guard (may be bar, chain, strap, or string) on a curb bit is permitted.
 - Rein chains with a spade bit are allowed.

All curb bits must be free of mechanical devices. Nothing, such as extensions, rivets, or prongs, may protrude below the mouthpiece (bars). The following, but not limited to these, are prohibited:

- Slip or gag bits, half cheeks, bits with hooks and slots, donut, or flat polo mouthpieces and kimberwicks.
- Roping bits with reins attached to a single ring at the center of a cross bar.
- Any rein design or other devices that increase the effective length and thereby the leverage of the shank of a standard western bit.
- Round, rolled, braided, or rawhide curb straps are prohibited.

Curb straps/Curb Chains:

Curb chains and flat leather chin straps must be at least ½" (12.7 mm) in width and lie flat against the jaw of the horse. No wire, rawhide, metal, or other substance can be used in conjunction with or as part of the flat leather chin strap or curb chain. Round, rolled, braided or rawhide curb straps are prohibited.



Other:

- Protective "polo" style leg wraps **are permitted**, with color either white or matching natural color of the horse as much as possible. (*See WD121*)
- Fly hoods (ear covers) should be discreet in color and design and should not cover the horse's eyes. After completion of the test, the exhibitor or his representative is responsible for removing the fly hood to present to the designated equipment steward for inspection to ensure that nothing prohibited has been added.
- Whips: One whip, no longer than 47.2 inches (120 cm) including lash, is permitted in all classes/tests.

Prohibited Equipment:

- Anything that alters the intended use of equipment as provided for in the description of appointments for a given class/test.
- Use of martingales, bit guards, any kind of gadgets (such as bearing, side, running, balancing reins, nasal strips, tongue tied down, etc.), any kind of boots (including splint boots, bell boots, Easyboots, hock boots, etc.), or tail bandages, any form of blinkers, and nose covers are cause for elimination.
- Rein additions or attachments that create additional leverage by any means are not allowed.
- Any decoration of the horse with extravagant items, such as ribbons or flowers, etc. in the mane, tail, etc. Exception: costumed freestyle.
- Costumed Freestyle: Any accessories that may frighten other horses and/or threaten the safety of riders in the warm-up area may be prohibited in the warm-up area, at the discretion of competition management.
- Garrocha poles are prohibited in all classes.

ATTIRE

Required apparel:

- Suitable western hat. Protective headgear may be worn without penalty (See GR801).
- Long-sleeved shirt with any type of collar; short sleeves may be worn at the discretion of the judge.
- Trousers, pants, a one-piece long-sleeved equitation suit, provided it includes a collar.
- Boots. Tall English boots, clearly visible on the outside of pants, are not permitted.

Optional apparel:

- Necktie, kerchief, bolo tie, or pin.
- Vest, jacket, coat, and/or sweater.
- Spurs: Western style, with or without blunt tines, English dressage style, roller ball, and blunt bumper spurs are permitted. Rowels must be vertical. Spurs with sharp tines are not permitted.



LEGAL bumper spur

- Chaps, shotgun chaps, chinks, or split riding skirt
 - Western half-chaps: Half chaps must have some kind of Western style decorations, such as contrasting color scroll, conchos, beading, and/or fringe. Plain English half-chaps are prohibited.
- Protective headgear is acceptable; not required to be of western style.







WARM UP RING/TRAINING AREAS






Note: Schooling and warm-up areas must be monitored by the designated stewards starting at least 30 minutes before the first scheduled ride.







- The restrictions regarding Illegal Equipment (*see WD122*) apply to warm-up and other training areas; however, training martingales (only with snaffle rein or plain snaffle bridle), boots, bandages (without magnets), and earmuffs are permitted.
- A training martingale consists of a divided strap attached to the girth that does not provide downward pull; the extension of each strap must be connected from the point of division only to the rein on the same side and must be free to slide. The rings through which the reins slide must be connected to a neck strap.
- Fly hoods (ear covers) that do not cover the horse's eyes are permitted in warm-up and other training areas.
- Single direct side reins or double sliding reins (triangle reins) are permitted only when longeing (mounted or unmounted). A single direct side rein is defined as an auxiliary rein affixed to the bit and to the girth, saddle, or surcingle on the side of the horse (not between the legs).
- Only one longe line is permitted while longeing. A longe line must attach only to the halter, cavesson or snaffle bit of a bridle and go directly to the hand of the longeur.
- The following whips are permitted for schooling:
 - One whip no longer than 47.2 inches (120 cm), including lash, may be carried by the rider when mounted.
 - One longeing whip is permitted only when longeing. There is no restriction on the length of whip permitted for working a horse in hand.






BIT EXAMPLES FOR WESTERN DRESSAGE – LEGAL AND NOT LEGAL




Snaffle bits

Bit	Determination	Reason
 <p><i>Inlaid two-piece mouthpiece</i></p>	<p>LEGAL</p>	
 <p><i>D-Ring</i></p>	<p>LEGAL if size meets rule requirement.</p>	<p>Smooth rollers same circumference of the bar and that don't affect the bend of the mouthpiece</p>
 <p><i>O-ring; 3 piece mouthpiece with barrel</i></p>	<p>LEGAL</p>	
 <p><i>O-ring bit; barrel mouthpiece</i></p>	<p>LEGAL</p>	
 <p><i>Flat 3-piece mouthpiece</i></p>	<p>LEGAL</p>	<p>Legal if connecting bar meets measurement requirements</p>
 <p><i>Mullen mouth</i></p>	<p>LEGAL</p>	






 <p><i>Snaffle with curb strap</i></p>	<p>LEGAL</p>	<p><i>Legal if reins are attached above bit hobble/curb strap</i></p>
 <p><i>Center hinged joint in snaffle</i></p>	<p>LEGAL</p>	<p><i>Center hinged joint is (must be) smooth</i></p>
 <p><i>Center connecting ring</i></p>	<p>LEGAL</p>	<p><i>Connecting ring and bars meet (must meet) measurement requirements</i></p>
 <p><i>Snaffle with a port</i></p>	<p>LEGAL</p>	
 <p><i>Full cheek snaffle</i></p>	<p>LEGAL</p>	







Bit	Determination	Reason
 <p data-bbox="358 407 529 436"><i>A Baucher bit</i></p>	NOT LEGAL	Not of O-ring, egg butt, or D-ring configuration
 <p data-bbox="363 701 524 730"><i>Bicycle chain</i></p>	NOT LEGAL	
 <p data-bbox="367 989 521 1018"><i>Twisted wire</i></p>	NOT LEGAL	
 <p data-bbox="358 1241 529 1270"><i>Wire-wrapped</i></p>	NOT LEGAL	
 <p data-bbox="321 1598 570 1627"><i>Twisted mouthpiece</i></p>	NOT LEGAL	
 <p data-bbox="375 1923 513 1953"><i>Twisted bit</i></p>	NOT LEGAL	



 <p><i>Mouthpiece edges sharp, flat</i></p>	<p>NOT LEGAL</p>	<p><i>Flat mouthpiece with sharp edges, not rounded</i></p>
 <p><i>Ridgid donut shape</i></p>	<p>NOT LEGAL</p>	
 <p><i>Type of kimberwick</i></p>	<p>NOT LEGAL</p>	<p><i>Slots on the rings</i></p>
 <p><i>Type of kimberwick</i></p>	<p>NOT LEGAL</p>	<p><i>Slots on the rings</i></p>
 <p><i>Slots on rings</i></p>	<p>NOT LEGAL</p>	<p><i>Slots on the rings and mouthpiece wrapped in wire; port (connecting piece higher than allowed)</i></p>

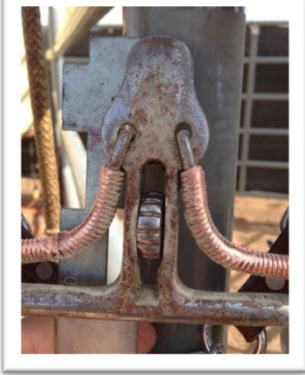




	<p>NOT LEGAL</p>	<p><i>Slots on rings</i></p>
	<p>NOT LEGAL</p>	<p><i>Twisted wire not permitted</i></p>
 <p>Half-cheek</p>	<p>NOT LEGAL</p>	<p><i>Half cheek not permitted</i></p>







Curb bits






Bit	Determination	Reason
 <p><i>Hinged mouthpiece</i></p>	<p>LEGAL</p>	<p><i>Allowed as long as it does not have a pinch point or sharp edges</i></p>
 <p><i>Inlaid, latex wrapped</i></p>	<p>LEGAL</p>	<p><i>Legal as long as mouthpiece is not greater than 3/4 inch in diameter</i></p>
 <p><i>Traditional spade bit</i></p>	<p>LEGAL</p>	<p><i>Example of wire on braces of a traditional spade bit</i></p>
 <p><i>Rein chains</i></p>	<p>LEGAL</p>	<p><i>Example of spade bit</i></p>
 <p><i>Half-breed bit</i></p>	<p>LEGAL</p>	

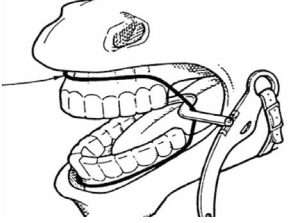
 <p>Legal bit design</p>	<p>LEGAL</p>	
 <p>Lip strap Slobber Guard-bar shown</p>	<p>LEGAL</p>	<p>Lip strap and bar, chain, strap, or string slobber guard (all legal)</p>
 <p>Roller on bar</p>	<p>LEGAL</p>	<p>The roller forms a continuous line</p>
 <p>Rivets on joint piece</p>	<p>LEGAL</p>	<p>Legal because rivets or knobs are very short, smooth, and rounded to join the mouthpiece together. Extend very little below the bar.</p>
 <p>Rollers on bar</p>	<p>LEGAL</p>	<p>Rollers attached to the center of the bit are allowed and may extend below the bar.</p>
 <p>Jointed mouthpiece</p>	<p>LEGAL</p>	<p>Jointed mouthpieces are allowed with a curb bit and may consist of 2 or 3 pieces</p>







	LEGAL	<i>Allowed on curb bit. Bars may be inlaid but must be smooth or latex-wrapped.</i>
<i>Broken mouthpiece</i>	NOT LEGAL	<i>Gag or slip mouthpiece</i>
		

Bit	Determination	Reason
 <p data-bbox="203 615 324 646">Spade bit</p>	NOT LEGAL	Port is higher than 3.5 inches (wire on braces is legal)
 <p data-bbox="203 840 584 871">Curb bit with connecting pieces</p>	NOT LEGAL	Three connecting pieces with joints allow the mouthpiece to bend. Only one connecting piece is allowed.
 <p data-bbox="503 1144 657 1176">Rigid donut</p>	NOT LEGAL	
 <p data-bbox="462 1449 560 1480">Gag bit</p>	NOT LEGAL	
 <p data-bbox="203 1753 406 1787">Jr. cow horse bit</p>	NOT LEGAL	Sliding mouthpiece on rings allows extra leverage

	<p>NOT LEGAL</p>	<p><i>Gag or slip mouthpiece</i></p>
 <p>Curb bit</p>	<p>NOT LEGAL</p>	<p><i>Twisted bars</i></p>
 <p>Mustache bit</p>	<p>NOT LEGAL</p>	<p><i>Bars curve down to a slight point</i></p>
 <p>Curb bit</p>	<p>NOT LEGAL</p>	<p><i>Prongs extend below bars</i></p>
 <p>Flat polo type bit</p>	<p>NOT LEGAL</p>	<p><i>Mouthpiece must be rounded</i></p>
 <p>Roping bit</p>	<p>NOT LEGAL</p>	<p><i>Reins must attach to each shank</i></p>

 <p>Mikmar Combination bit</p>	<p>NOT LEGAL</p>	<p>Bars are flat and added nose string is not permitted</p>
	<p>NOT LEGAL</p>	<p>Bars are twisted, not rounded</p>
	<p>NOT LEGAL</p>	<p>Bars are flat, not rounded</p>
 <p>Curb bit with rollers on bars</p>	<p>NOT LEGAL</p>	<p>Separate rollers do not create a continuous line</p>
 <p>Rein extensions</p>	<p>NOT LEGAL</p>	<p>Rein extensions that are tight enough to lock onto the bit to lock movement are not legal</p>

	NOT LEGAL	<i>Example of a mechanical device that alters the use of equipment</i>
---	------------------	--

Curb straps/Curb chains	Determination	Reason
	<p>LEGAL</p>	<p><i>Threading of lip strap between layers of curb strap</i></p>
	<p>LEGAL</p>	<p><i>Legal if measures at least ½ inch in width</i></p>
	<p>LEGAL</p>	<p><i>Legal if measures at least ½ inch in width</i></p>
	<p>LEGAL</p>	<p><i>Legal if measures at least ½ inch in width</i></p>
	<p>LEGAL</p>	<p><i>Legal ONLY used with snaffle as a bit hobble; NOT LEGAL with a curb bit.</i></p>
	<p>LEGAL</p>	<p><i>Legal ONLY used with snaffle as a bit hobble; NOT LEGAL with a curb bit.</i></p>

Curb straps/Curb chains	Determination	Reason
	NOT LEGAL	<i>“Bumps” on the inside; does not lie flat against the horse</i>
	NOT LEGAL	<i>Round bar welded to inside of chain is not allowed</i>
	NOT LEGAL	<i>Tacks on the inside</i>
	NOT LEGAL	<i>Not legal if a metal bar is sewn between layers of leather</i>
	NOT LEGAL	<i>This curb chain is less than 1/2 inch in width</i>
	NOT LEGAL	<i>Braided curb strap is not smooth and not legal with curb bit</i>