



NaSHA Instructor Quick Guide: Rider Progression Levels

Rider Progression Levels are designed to support lesson planning, communication, and thoughtful horse development. They are not rankings or requirements.

How to Use Levels in Lessons

- Use levels to identify training priorities, not labels
- Observe patterns over multiple sessions
- Evaluate consistency, not perfection
- Consider the horse's mental and physical response first

What Levels Are (and Aren't)

Levels are:

- A shared language
- A planning tool
- A way to make progress visible

Levels are **not**:

- Competition classifications
- Clinic evaluations
- Permanent labels

Best Practices

- Riders may work across adjacent levels
- Movement between levels is fluid
- Regression is part of progress
- Readiness matters more than time

The Instructor's Role

Your role is to:

- Protect the horse
- Provide clear feedback
- Adjust pressure thoughtfully
- Support long-term development

When in doubt, slow down and return to clarity.