

**WAC 260-52-045 The riding crop.** (1) Only riding crops approved by the stewards and meeting the following specifications will be allowed:

(a) Maximum weight of 8 ounces;  
(b) Maximum length (including flap) of 30 inches;  
(c) Minimum diameter of the shaft of one-half inch; and  
(d) The contact area of the shaft must be smooth with no protrusions or raised surface.

(2) The only additional feature that may be attached to the riding crop is a flap. If a flap is attached it must meet the following specifications:

(a) Maximum length of the flap from the end of the shaft is one inch;

(b) Maximum width of the flap is 1.6 inches, with a minimum width of 0.8 inch;

(c) The flap, from the end of the shaft, may not contain any reinforcements or additions;

(d) There may be no binding within 7 inches of the end of the flap;

(e) The flap must be humane, cushioned with memory foam or other similar shock absorbing material, unaltered from the original manufacturer, and sewn down each side of the outer layer;

(f) The flap must be dark in color and made of a material that does not harden over time; and

(g) The requirement for the riding crop is waived for Class C race meets as defined in RCW 67.16.130.

(3) The riding crop is subject to approval by the stewards and subject to inspection by any steward, commission racing official, official veterinarian, or investigator.

(4) Although the use of a riding crop is not required, any jockey who uses a riding crop during a race may do so only in a manner consistent with exerting his/her best efforts. In all races where a jockey will ride without a riding crop, an announcement will be made over the public address system. No device designed to increase or retard the speed of a horse, other than an approved riding crop is permitted on the grounds of any racing association. Riding crops may not be used on 2-year-old horses before April 1 of each year.

(5) Prohibited uses of the riding crop include striking a horse:

(a) On the head, flanks or on any other part of its body other than the shoulders or hind quarters except when necessary to control a horse;

(b) During the post parade or after the finish of the race, except when necessary to control the horse;

(c) Excessively or brutally causing welts or breaks in the skin;

(d) When the horse is clearly out of the race or has obtained its maximum placing;

(e) Persistently even though the horse is showing no response under the riding crop; and

(f) Striking another rider or horse.

(6) The riding crop should only be used for safety, correction, and encouragement. All riders should consider the following when using the riding crop:

(a) When using the crop the rider should give the horse a chance to respond;

(b) A chance to respond is defined as one or more of the following actions:

(i) Pushing on their horse with a rein in each hand keeping the riding crop in the up or down position;  
(ii) Showing the horse the riding crop without making contact;  
and

(iii) Moving the riding crop from one hand to the other.

(c) Using the riding crop in rhythm with the horse's stride.

(7) A rider may not strike a horse more than three times in succession without giving the horse a chance to respond as defined above.

A violation of this subsection shall not be subject for the disqualification of a horse.

(8) After the race or during training all horses are subject to inspection by a steward, official veterinarian, commission racing official, or investigator.

(9) Any trainer, owner, or other licensee that instructs a jockey to use the riding crop in a manner not consistent with these rules may be subject to disciplinary action.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 67.16.020. WSR 20-03-088, § 260-52-045, filed 1/13/20, effective 2/13/20; WSR 18-07-017, § 260-52-045, filed 3/9/18, effective 4/9/18; WSR 10-07-050, § 260-52-045, filed 3/11/10, effective 4/11/10.]