

Hat Rule (no changes for 2026)

Members must always wear a protective hat when mounted, to the standards specified below. The Pony Club aligns its riding hat standards with those of other British Equestrian Federation (BEF) Member bodies. It is strongly recommended to check other governing body and individual Pony Club sports rulebooks regarding specific hat standards, as they may have differing standards.

Only hats to the following specifications are acceptable at any Pony Club activity as of 1st January 2025:

Hat Standard	Safety Mark
Snell E2016 & 2021 with the official Snell label and number	
PAS 015: 2011 with BSI Kitemark or Inspec IC Mark	
(BS) EN 1384:2023 with BSI Kitemark or Inspec IC Mark	
VG1 with BSI Kitemark or Inspec IC Mark	
ASTM-F1163 2015 & 2023 with the SEI mark	
AS/NZS 3838, 2006 with SAI Global Mark	

EQUESTRIAN SAFETY STANDARDS

	Flat impact	Hazard edge impact	Spike	Crush resistance	Hemisphere anvil	Horseshoe anvil
Snell E2016 & E2021						
PAS015 2011						
EN1384 2023						
VG1						
ASTM F1163 2015 & 2023						

2023 ONLY

Note: Some hats are dual-badged with different standards. If a hat contains at least one compliant hat standard it is deemed suitable to competition, even if it is additionally labelled with an older standard.

- For cross-country riding (at all levels) including Eventing, Arena Eventing, Tetrathlon and Horse Trials, together with Pony Racing (whether it be tests, rallies, competition or training) and Mounted Games competitions, a jockey skull cap must be worn with no fixed peak, peak type extensions or noticeable protuberances, not greater than 5mm, above the eyes or to the front, and should have an even round or elliptical shape with a smooth or slightly abrasive surface. A removable hat cover with a light flexible peak may be used if required.
- No recording device is permitted (e.g. hat cameras) as they may have a negative effect on the performance of the hat in the event of a fall.

- The fit of the hat and the adjustment of the harness are as crucial as the quality. Members are advised to try several makes to find the best fit. The hat should not move on the head when the head is tipped forward. The Pony Club recommends you visit a qualified BETA (British Equestrian Trade Association) fitter.
- Hats must be replaced after a severe impact as subsequent protection will be significantly reduced. Hats deteriorate with age and should be replaced after three to five years depending upon the amount of use.
- Hats must be worn at all times (including at prize-giving) when mounted with a chinstrap fastened and adjusted so as to prevent movement of the hat in the event of a fall.
- For Show Jumping: hat covers, if applicable, shall be plain dark blue, black or brown only. Branch/Centre team colours are permitted for team competitions. **There should be no additions to the hat cover e.g. pom poms.**
- For Dressage: hats and hat covers must be predominately black, navy blue or a conservative dark colour that matches the rider's jacket for Area competitions or above. The Pony Club Hat silk is also acceptable.
- For Mounted Games: hat covers, if applicable, shall be dark blue, black, or brown only.
- The Official Steward/Organiser may, at their discretion, eliminate a competitor riding in the area of the competition without a hat or with the chinstrap unfastened or with a hat that does not comply with these standards.

The Pony Club strongly discourages purchasing second-hand riding hats or buying them from online retailers without a professional fitting in person.

Hat Checks and Tagging

The Pony Club and its Branches and Centres will appoint Officials, who are familiar with The Pony Club hat rule, to carry out hat checks and tag each hat that complies with the requirements set out in the hat rule with an Pony Club hat tag. Hats fitted with a Pony Club, British Eventing (BE) or British Riding Club (BRC) hat tag will not need to be checked on subsequent occasions. However, the Pony Club reserves the right to randomly spot check any hat regardless of whether it is already tagged.

Tagging is an external verification of the internal label and indicates that a hat meets the accepted standards. The tag does NOT imply any check of the fit and condition of the hat has been undertaken.

It is considered to be the responsibility of the Member's parent(s) / guardian(s) to ensure that their hat complies with the required standards and is tagged before they go to any Pony Club event. Also, they are responsible for ensuring that the manufacturer's guidelines with regard to fit and replacement are followed.

For further information on hat standards, testing and fitting, please refer to the British Equestrian Trade Association (BETA) website: [British Equestrian Trade Association - Safety and your head \(beta-uk.org\)](http://British Equestrian Trade Association - Safety and your head (beta-uk.org))