



7 Steps to create a Freestyle to Music

STEP ONE: Create your floor plan

Look at the test papers for your level. This will list what movements are required. You can find them here:

[Preliminary](#) (Closed Unrestricted only) [Novice-Advanced](#) [FEI](#)

You can include other movements not required provided they are not above your horse's level, but these will not be included in your technical marks. They may influence your artistic marks such as harmony and choreography. Always refer to the freestyle section of EA rules for what is or is not permitted [HERE](#)

Your freestyle should show off you and your horse's strengths. Imagine you could create a perfect test to set up the movements in the way which work best for you and your horse? In a freestyle you can! [This document](#) provides an idea of what is a higher degree of difficulty. Examples include changes of bend, or doing movements away from the support of the wall.

Ride your floor plan, film it and see how it flows from a ground view. Make sure it falls within the minimum and maximum time required for your level. Adjust accordingly!

STEP TWO: Film your horse's paces

Film your horse in all of their paces: walk, trot, canter, and passage and piaffe if applicable. If you have created your floor plan already, you can use this video instead.

This will allow you to tell the tempo of their steps, so you know what music you need.

STEP THREE: Use the video with a metronome app to work out your horse's beats per minute (BPM)

Download and open Metronome apps such as Soundbrenner (Free). Some recommended apps are [here](#).

For most of these apps, you would simply tap your phone's screen every time the horse's foot falls. In the walk, you can tap each time a foreleg lands. In the trot, tap each time a foreleg lands. In the canter, tap on the metronome every time the inside foreleg falls.

With these apps, after you tap for 5-10 strides, the apps will detect the average rhythm and tap out a rhythm on a metronome. You can then use plus or minus buttons to make it faster or slower. Keep watching the video to see when it seems to make noise just as your horse's legs land. Make sure it continues to match - music may 'appear' to match for a few seconds, but gradually gets further and further off. This means the metronome is close to your horse's rhythm, but not quite there.



STEP FOUR: Search for music which matches your horse's BPM.

Let's say your metronome indicated your horse trots at 80 beats per minute.

You can google "songs which are 80 beats per minute" and many sites will come up with a list.

You can select music which is half or double that bpm. So you could also google "songs which are 40 beats per minute" or "songs which are 160 beats per minute".

If you googled "songs which are 80 beats per minute" and decided that 'Ho Hey' by the Lumineers was your song of choice. Search for "<song name> + instrumental" or "<song name> orchestral version" or "<song name> karaoke version" to help find lyric free tracks, e.g. "Ho Hey Lumineers Orchestral version"

If you want to start with the song first, places to look for music include:

·Search for 'dressage freestyle' in Spotify and similar apps and see what comes up under playlists
·Movie, TV Show and even video game soundtracks are a great place to start. You can go through music composers' Spotify profiles to find music you like

You can then check the Beats Per Minutes of these songs or use apps such as "BPM" created by Cheebow to tell you the beats per minute of any song on Spotify.

Have a song in mind already?

You can google how many beats per minute it has. If it's slightly too fast or slow, some apps will allow you to speed it or slow it down. More on that later! This works if the song is an instrumental, as spoken words can sound strange when sped up or slowed down.

STEP FIVE: Purchase the song/s to edit them.

You would need to buy the song so you can put them together in an app or editing software. By this stage you will also need to have filmed you riding your floorplan as accurately as possible.

There are many places to buy songs. You can visit the artist's website who will often have links for their own work. There are also places such as Bandcamp, iTunes store, 7digital, Amazon Music, SoundCloud, or HDTracks.

Free editing software:

- GarageBand for Apple/iOS/Mac. It can be used on the phone or computer. It lets you import the video in so you can watch it at the same time, and for this reason is the most ideal.
- Audacity. This is a computer software only.
- For android you can use Ntrack Studio, FL Studio, Soundtrap, Soundbrenner and more.

Each app has their own instructions, but there are some links for Audacity and GarageBand below.



STEP SIX: When editing your music, you can get as complicated or not as you like!

The editing phase is the hardest and slowest, so don't be discouraged if it doesn't happen straight away!

If you're not very tech savvy, you can just put the songs together for your walk, trot and canter tours and enjoy sand dancing to your favourite music.

For more complicated music editing, and potentially better marks, you can show more difference in your music. You can use more dramatic parts of the music for movements like lengthened/medium/extended trots, or different music for different movements.

You can make these transitions between the music for different paces, or for transitions within the paces, smooth by fading in and out.

You can see how this idea is applied in practice to a dressage freestyle [here](#). You can see how you can use changes in the music to mark transitions between movements.

Tips on how to do that?

Garageband (Mac, iPad, iPhone)

[Import video tutorial](#) [Fade tracks in and out for smooth transitions](#)

[Split tracks and push them apart or pull them together tutorial](#)

Slow down the tempo of a track to match your horse's tempo. Try not to slow it down by too much, e.g. [here](#) slowing a song from 120 to 80 beats per minute starts to warp the sound.

There is an entire YouTube collection of videos on how to edit music using GarageBand [here](#)

[Here](#) is a collection of Youtube videos on editing music in Audacity.

Most free apps like Audacity do NOT let you import video. Here are some ways you can work around that:

- 1) Have your video on another device and press play on both your track and video at the same time
- 2) Count the strides in your video. If your tracks are correct to your horse's beats per minute, you will know exactly how many beats you need of your music for each movement, because each beat = one stride!
- 3) Do a rough edit in a video based software first. You can roughly sync up your tracks to the right position, but you won't be able to do many edits such as a cross-fade. Examples of apps include most Movie Maker apps or InShot for phones.

STEP SEVEN: Export your music and practice riding your freestyle to it!