

SADDLE FIT CHECK

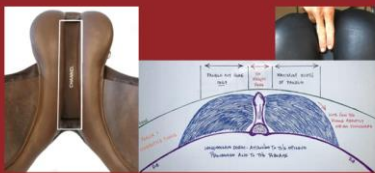
GOALS

Prevent:

- ◆ Discomfort
- ◆ Behaviour issues
- ◆ Damage, and
- ◆ Distribute rider weight evenly

- ☛ The goal of saddle fitting is to prevent discomfort, behavioural issues, and damage by avoiding pressure on reflex points and distributing the rider's weight
- ☛ Listen to what your horse is trying to tell you and make sure your saddle is re-checked every 2 to 3 months

1. CHANNEL WIDTH



1. CHANNEL WIDTH

- ☛ No spinal bony nor ligament contact
- ☛ 4 Finger-width channel
- ☛ Should not be narrower at the back, consider saddle movement in turns, circles, mounting
- ☛ Drastically too wide isn't good either due to rib contact

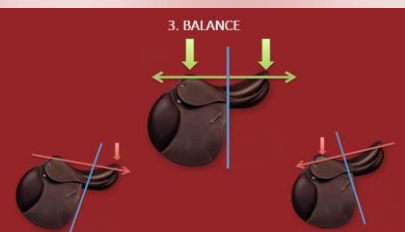
2. BILLET ALIGNMENT



2. BILLET ALIGNMENT

- ☛ Billets should hang vertical to the girth area
- ☛ If angled back scapula or elbow will be rubbed
- ☛ If angled forward rider weight placement may be incorrect

3. BALANCE



3. BALANCE

- ☛ Saddle should sit behind scapula and last mane hair
- ☛ Cantle could be a little higher
- ☛ Rolling chalk on the seat should roll to the middle point
- ☛ Wrong balance causes rider hollow/hunch back, chair seat

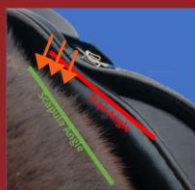
4. WITHER CLEARANCE



4. WITHER CLEARANCE

- ☛ 2-4 Fingers above withers (more is better)
- ☛ 2-3 Fingers on sides and all-around wither
- ☛ Ensure also clears back part of wither which is hidden
- ☛ Shoulder blade must be clear when horse leg extended

5. SADDLE TREE ANGLE



5. SADDLE TREE ANGLE

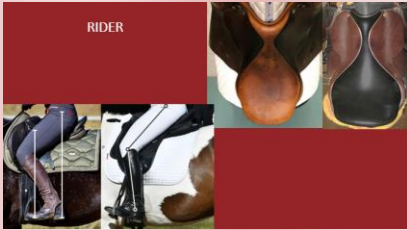
- ☛ Tree angle must match shoulder angle (not depression)
- ☛ If too narrow horse won't go forward, shake/raise head
- ☛ Pressure on reflex point here shortens shoulder movement and hollows horse's back

<p>6. SADDLE TREE WIDTH</p>	<p>6. SADDLE TREE WIDTH (Gullet)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure tree width is measured on shoulder width and has clearance for scapula movement Should not be measured on wither thickness nor any hollow depression located behind scapula at standstill
<p>6. SADDLE TREE WIDTH</p>	<p>6. SADDLE TREE WIDTH (Gullet)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scapula moves about 10cm backward when a horse's leg is picked up and leg moved forward in stride Saddle must not impinge on this area and must be wide enough to allow scapula to cleanly glide through easily
<p>TRIANGLE OF DOOM</p>	<p>TRIANGLE OF DOOM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pressure on Spinalis muscle is a reflex point for stopping shoulder movement (slowing/stopping horse from moving) and hollows horse's back (stallions mating bite) Pressure here "dooms" the horse to pain and discomfort
<p>7. FULL PANEL CONTACT</p>	<p>7. FULL PANEL CONTACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With one hand holding saddle down; you should be able to slide your other hand under the stirrup bar Keep knuckles and fingernails to sky Weight distribution needs to be consistent all the way
<p>8. SADDLE LENGTH</p>	<p>8. SADDLE LENGTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With chalk draw back rear edge of shoulder blade (the "lump") while someone holds horse's front leg lifted up With chalk draw last rib (hairline up or palpate last rib) Saddle must sit between front and back chalk lines
<p>8. SADDLE LENGTH</p>	<p>6. SADDLE LENGTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changing directional pattern of hair (←Picture) is usually relative to the last supportive vertebra, vertically up. Saddle must not extend past this point Saddle sits behind shoulder and in front of this last rib line

<p>9. SADDLE STRAIGHTNESS</p> 	<h2>7. SADDLE STRAIGHTNESS</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none">With safety considered, stand behind and assess saddle channel alignment with spineThere should be no spine contact, only air and lightContact saddler for naturally crooked horses or padding compressing more on one side (saddle falls to one side)	
<p>IMPRESSION PAD</p> 	<h2>IMPRESSION PAD (and pads in general)</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Left image shows no channel clearanceRight image shows good channel clearanceA word on pads; If the shoe (saddle) is too small, thick socks (additional pads) will only make saddle even tighter! Adjust saddle to fit well, so no need for excess padsPads must have wither raise shape and not straight top	
<h2>III--Fit indicators</h2>		
<h3>Dip Before Wither</h3>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">Pinching gulletNarrow gullet/angleSpinal pressureBridging or rocking	<h3>Stress Lines</h3>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">Narrow gulletTight tree widthAngled tree	<h3>White Marks</h3>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">Narrow gulletForward girthToo thick saddle padSynthetic pad
<h3>Bulges and Atrophy</h3>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">Narrow gulletNarrow angleSpinal pressureIncorrect girth angle	<h3>Sweat Marks</h3>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">Sweat gland damageNarrow gulletForward girthWrong billet	<h3>Spinal Damage</h3>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">Too narrowToo long
<h3>Roach</h3>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">Narrow gulletWither pinchLumbar subluxationNerve damage	<h3>Incorrect Development</h3>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">Too longNarrow channelRocking	<h3>Flank Contraction</h3>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">Narrow gulletTight tree angleNarrow channelWither weight
<p><i>Take this information out to the horses and assess your saddle fit and damage signs present.</i></p>		

ADDITIONAL

RIDER



CONSIDERATIONS - RIDER

- ☛ Saddle twist; Male narrow, female wider twist
- ☛ Stirrup bar; If too far forward rider is put behind vertical
- ☛ Flap length; Length of thigh from hip to knee
- ☛ Seat size; Measured by thigh length, not glute 'padding'
- ☛ Stirrup length; Iron to touch ankle when leg out of stirrup

CONSIDERATIONS



CONSIDERATIONS - FEEDING

- ☛ The horse is a monogastric and a continuous grazer 24/7
- ☛ The stomach should NEVER be empty. Or less than 2 hours
- ☛ Full (grass, hay, chaff) stomach stops gastric acids from the lower part of the stomach splashing around and irritating the upper sections of the gastrointestinal tract
- ☛ This acid splash that occurs in horses exercised on an empty stomach is very painful and causes gastric ulcers
- ☛ Feed horses (hay or chaff) before each and every class

CONSIDERATIONS



CONSIDERATIONS - HOOF

- ☛ For a horse standing square on said hoof, you should be able to draw a straight line through pastern and hoof - Lines should match, this is called the Hoof Pastern Axis
- ☛ Much like you walking in uncomfortable, ill-fitting shoes all day, a broken back line (low flat heels and/or long toe) is very painful and requires extra tendon effort and energy

CONSIDERATIONS



CONSIDERATIONS - BITS

- ☛ Rider reins are best attached to the halter, not the bit
- ☛ Horses can be led from halter without bit and bridle if rider kept on lead and class is in enclosed space (arena, paddock), Coaches agree and update form HOR-03 and minute at a Committee Meeting
- ☛ Bitless bridle use (form) can be submitted to CASP
- ☛ Ensure bit not breaking teeth seal, thin palates are hard fit
- ☛ Thin bits are harsh, thicker bits are kinder, if tongue space
- ☛ Generally, curve shaped bits are better fit and comfier

Take this information out to the horses and assess your saddle fit and damage signs present.

<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	HORSE NAME:									
SADDLE FIT										
1. Channel Width										
2. Billet Alignment										
3. Balance										
4. Withers Clearance										
5. Saddle Tree Angle										
6. Saddle Tree Width										
7. Full Panel Contact										
8. Saddle Length										
9. Saddle Straight										

DAMAGE										
Dip before wither										
Stress line										
Whit marks										
Bulge or atrophy										
Sweat marks										
Spinal damage										
Roach										
Incorrect develop										
Flank contraction										
Hoof pastern axis										

