

Equipment

The basic equipment required for 4-H members is a saddle, saddle pad or blanket, bridle, bit, halter and lead rope. If riding in competitions, it is the responsibility of the rider to check for rules regarding equipment. Some 4-H regions may have rules restricting some of the equipment discussed in this chapter. Most 4-H competitions and clubs follow the rules and regulations as outlined by Equine Canada. This rule book is updated regularly and is available from: **The Alberta Equine Federation at www.equestrian.ab.ca**.

The use of other equipment will depend on your horse and the type of riding you do.

When fitting tack to your horse, remember that each horse is an individual and requires individual adjustments. Pay careful attention to make sure your equipment is adjusted properly. It will work better, make your horse more content and will be safer.

When buying equipment be sure that it is well made of the best materials and fitted to you and your horse. It does not need to be fancy or flashy and it does not need to cost a lot. Good, functional equipment that is well taken care of is what is most important. When buying new tack made of leather, examine the leather carefully. Feeling and smelling the leather can help to determine the quality of it. Leather that is well tanned and processed will have a characteristic pleasant smell and will not feel greasy. English (European) and North American leather is most desirable. Leather from India is less desirable because it comes from the hides of water buffalo and is more coarse, weaker and poorly constructed. Don't jeopardize comfort and safety for inferior, lower cost, poorly tanned and sewn tack.

Halter

The strongest halters are the flat nylon web halters, with double or triple strength (thickness) with large, heavy but smooth buckles. Avoid single strength (layer) halters with thin, sharp buckles.

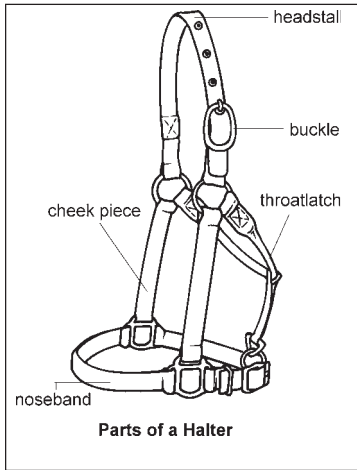
Make sure the halter is the right size for your horse's head and fits it correctly. A halter that is too big will be dangerous and one that is too small will rub and irritate your horse.



Adjusting the halter to fit properly will normally require simply adjusting the crownpiece. This adjustment is determined by the position of the noseband. The noseband should fall approximately two inches below the bony point of the cheek. If the noseband is too high it will rub and irritate the cheek and the chin strap will be pulled too high under the jaw (restricting jaw movement). If the noseband is too low, it may restrict breathing and your horse may easily rub the halter off. If the noseband and chin strap are adjustable, they should be set so two large fingers (two inches) may be placed

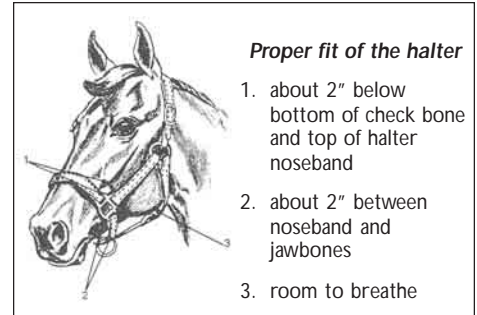
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under the noseband. If the throat latch can be adjusted, check that it is correct by flexing your horse's nose to its chest. If there is still space, it is correctly adjusted.



A halter is correctly adjusted and fits if:

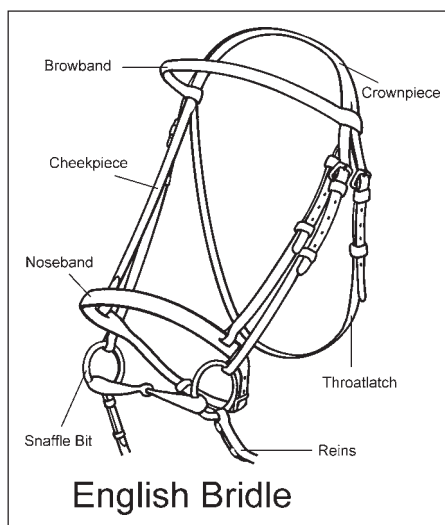
- 🐾 You can fit four fingers (sideways) under the throatlatch.
- 🐾 There is a two finger (sideways) clearance between the metal buckles on the noseband and the cheekbones.
- 🐾 You can fit two fingers sideways between the noseband and the nose.



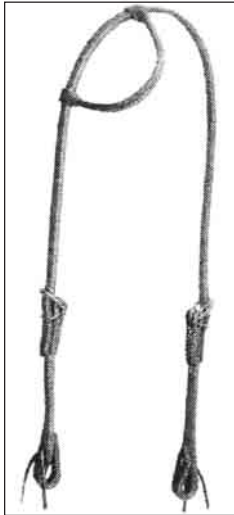
The leadrope should be at least two meters with a spring or trigger clip fitted to one end for fastening to the chin ring of the halter. It is safest to fasten them with the opening facing away from the horse's head. It should be strong so that if the horse pulls, it will not snap. Leadropes used for everyday should not have a chain on them.

Chains are common on leadshanks used for showing, but are not strong enough nor safe for daily use. When using a chain leadshank, run the chain through the halter ring and snap it back on itself (doubling it.) It should now be no longer than six inches.

Bridle



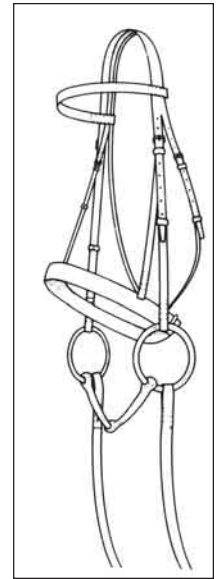
Your bridle is a very important piece of equipment that needs careful attention. The term headstall refers to everything on your bridle except the bit and reins. It should be made of strong leather. The width will be dependent on its use. The crownpiece should be smooth and should not pinch the ears. If your bridle has a browband, it should fit so it holds the crownpiece in place but does not pull behind the ears. If your bridle has a throat latch, it should be adjusted to allow three to four fingers (sideways) between it and the jawbone so the horse can flex its neck. The curb strap should be loose enough to allow two fingers (stacked) between the jaw and strap. If your bridle has a noseband it should be positioned two fingers below the cheek bone and adjusted one to two fingers between the noseband and jaw.



Ear Bridle (Western)

The Western Bridle Western headstalls come in two main styles, Browband or Ear Bridles. An ear bridle often will not have a throat latch whereas a browband always has a throat latch. Western bridles do not usually have nosebands.

The English Bridle English bridles always include a throatlatch and a noseband or cavesson. There are several types of nosebands: the plain cavesson, the drop noseband (buckles under the bit), the flash noseband (a plain cavesson with a strap attached that buckles under the bit) and others with special purposes.



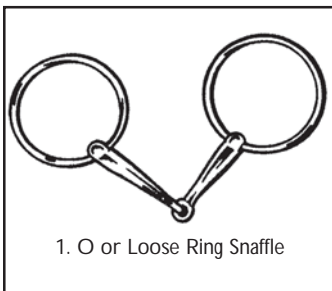
Snaffle bridle with loose-ring snaffle bit fitted (English)

Bits

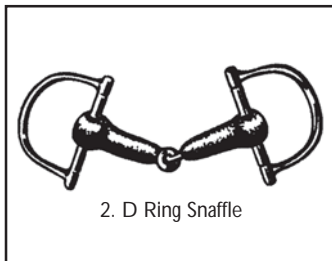
Bits can be divided into two main groups:

1. Non-leverage Bit (snaffle)
2. Leverage Bit (curb)

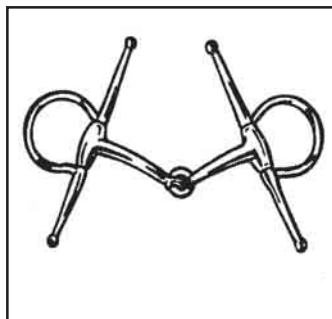
Three main types of snaffles



1. O or Loose Ring Snaffle



2. D Ring Snaffle



Both english and western riders use snaffles. Both riders also use leverage bits of various designs. Where the reins are attached determines whether the bit is being used as a snaffle or leverage. For example when using a Pelham, if the reins are attached to the ring of the mouthpiece it is a snaffle. If they are attached to the end of the shank it is being used as a curb. Leverage bits must have a curb strap or curb chain to work properly. In English, a snaffle bit never uses a chin strap or curb chain.

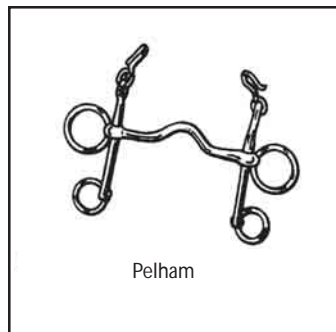
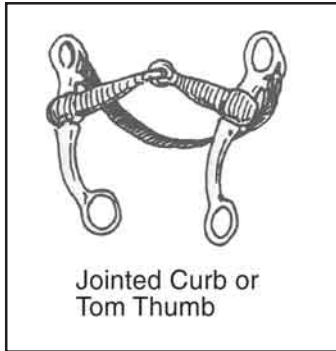
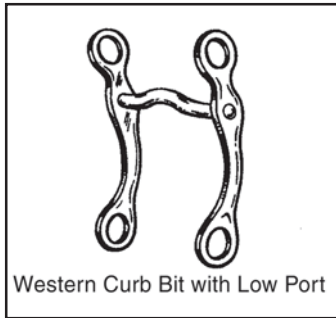
What is the difference between the two types of bits?

The shanks (in the leverage or curb bit) or rings (in the non-leverage or snaffle bit) are where the reins are attached.

- A When reins are attached to the rings on a mouthpiece, (as in a non-leverage bit) pressure is applied directly, because the rider's pull on the reins creates a direct pressure on the corners of the mouth, tongue and sometimes the bars, but does not affect the poll or chin groove of the horse. Snaffles fall under the category of non-leverage bits.
- B When shanks are added to a mouthpiece, "leverage" is created which allows the bit to apply pressure to parts other than the mouth. For example, on the poll through the crownpiece, under the chin through the curb strap and up against the palate when the bit is rocked forward (if it has a port of 2 inches or more).



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The Snaffle Bit

- Snaffles vary widely in design and material, but do have common features which include a mouthpiece that can be either jointed or solid, with a ring at each end to which the reins are attached. A snaffle bit is used with two hands on the reins.
- The different basic rings available include the
 - loose or O-ring
 - D-ring
 - egg butt
- In general, snaffles are quite mild with severity determined by the smoothness and thickness of mouthpiece. The thicker the mouthpiece the milder the bit.
- Some common mouthpieces are ported, jointed and mullen mouth (solid mouthpiece with slight upward curve to relieve tongue pressure).
- A western snaffle's rings may be larger than is acceptable in English but not usually.
- Some western riders use a leather chin/curb strap with a snaffle to prevent it from pulling through the horse's mouth. English riders never use chin/curb straps. Western riders should use a leather chin strap with a snaffle. In case of a runaway horse, an open rein is used to regain control. If there is no chin strap the opposite side bit ring can easily be pulled into the horse's mouth causing it to panic.

English riders do not use a chin strap on a snaffle because they use either a cavesson so the horse can not open his mouth wide enough for the ring to go in or they use a full cheek snaffle which again could not be pulled through the mouth.

Leverage Bits

Often called the "curb" bit, the leverage bit is available in literally hundreds of shapes and numerous combinations of mouthpieces and shanks. Generally speaking, the longer and straighter the shank the more leverage and more severe the bit.

Just as the snaffle can have a variety of shapes of mouthpieces, so can the leverage (curb) bit. They also can have either a jointed or solid mouthpiece. They must have a "curb strap" that can be made of leather or chain that attaches to the bit and is placed under the horses chin. It is usually attached to the same ring as the bottom of the crown piece on the headstall.

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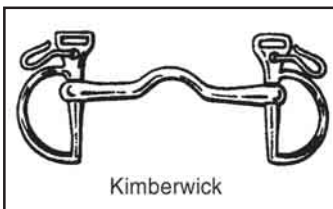
A solid mouth piece often has a “*bump*” known as a port in the middle. The port relieves pressure on the tongue but can apply pressure to the roof of the mouth if it is over 2 1/2” high. The higher the port, the more pressure on the roof of the mouth. Most Western riders try not to use a bit that puts pressure on the palate. A straight shank gives less reaction time than ones which are swept back.



☞ The kimberwick is a leverage bit. It has slots on the rings to attach the headstall and hooks to which a curb chain needs to be attached. A pull on the reins creates a short lever action through the rings themselves to the curb chain, applying pressure in the chin groove.

Types of Mouth Pieces

Jointed mouth pieces with 1 or 2 joints and loose shanks. This should probably be your first choice. This is a very common mouthpiece because the horse is used to jointed mouth pieces and the loose shanks allow the rider to signal the horse without applying pressure in the mouth. The rider can still ride with 2 hands on the reins and when using one hand to supple or do training exercises, the other side of the mouth is not affected.



The double jointed mouthpiece puts more pressure on the tongue and less on the bars as it allows the mouthpiece to wrap around the top of the tongue.

The ball and joint type jointed mouthpiece allows the rider to work one side of the horse’s face very independantly from the other and also allows the rider to lift the shoulders more easily.

Ported - may be high, medium or low in height. Remember to try and avoid use of high ports that create palate pressure. Some parts are covered and have a roller under the port to encourage salivation (half-breed).

Mullen Bit - soft upward curve in the solid mouthpiece.

Spade Bit - most severe with a 3 1/2 inch port, roller and springs. Not recommended for most riders and can be very cruel when used with harsh hands.



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Mouthpiece Materials

Stainless steel and sweet iron are common materials. Many have a copper inlay. Horses like the taste of sweet iron and copper and suck it like a candy. This causes them to salivate and they relax their jaw. A relaxed jaw is important for more advanced training.

Fitting the Bit

Be sure the bit is the correct size for your horse. The bit you use should match the width and depth of your horse's mouth. Open your horse's mouth to see if it has a shallow or thick tongue. While a thicker mouthpiece would be milder, it would cause discomfort on a thick tongue. To measure for width, stretch a string across the inside of your horse's mouth. At the corners, tie a knot where the mouthpiece would exit. You can then take this string with you to help you size up the right bit, when purchasing one.

A standard western bit is 5" wide and comes in a variety of thicknesses. The thickness is measured 1" in from the butt (where the mouthpiece joins the shank). Common thicknesses range from 5/16" to 3/4". Choose one that fits comfortably in your horse's mouth and gives you control.

See that you can put one finger on each side of the horse's mouth between the mouth and ring shank. Then adjust the cheekpiece to the proper length. Ideally there should be one small wrinkle in the corner of the lips when the bit is properly fitted. If the bit is too low it will knock and damage the horse's teeth. Adjust the cheekpieces to raise or lower the bit. If the bit is too high, the horse will be uncomfortable.

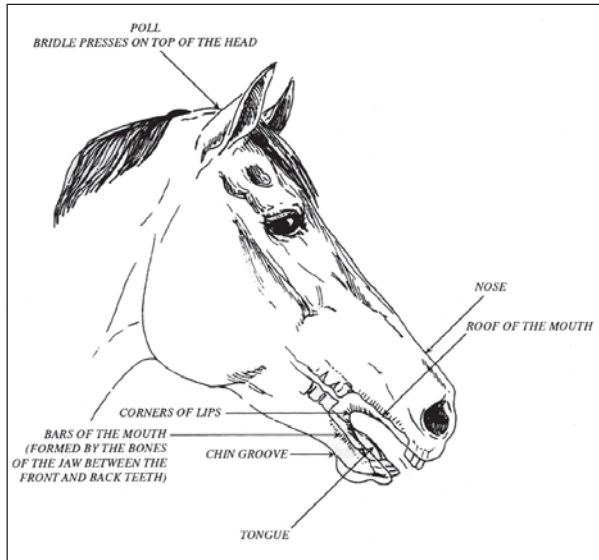
Check your bit often to see that it is not developing sharp edges on the joints that could cut or pinch your horse.

The bit is designed to put pressure on the sensitive parts of the horse's

The bit you use should be light and as mild as possible to maintain control of your horse. Do everything possible to keep your horse's mouth soft and responsive, remembering that the best methods of communication with your horse are the simplest and least harsh. Your horse will work much better for you if you do not have too severe of a bit. A thick snaffle is the softest bit you can use.

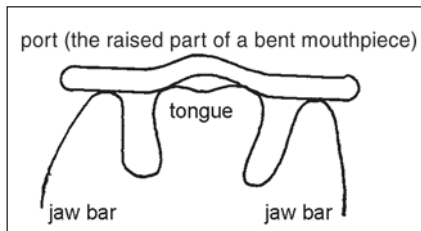
The Mechanics of the Bit

mouth. There are four main pressure points involving the bit and two secondary ones.

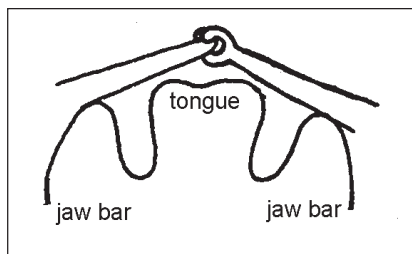


1. Tongue Pressure (M)
2. Bar Pressure (M)
3. Curb Pressure (chin groove) (M)
4. Palate Pressure (roof of the mouth) (M)
5. Lip Pressure (S)
6. Poll Pressure (S)

U Tongue Pressure - All bits put some downward pressure on the tongue. The tongue of the horse is probably as sensitive as our own tongue. A straight bit exerts more pressure than a jointed bit and a ported mouth puts the least pressure on the tongue, and is useful for horses with thicker than normal tongues. The width of the port also determines the amount of tongue pressure.



U Curb Pressure - The chin groove lies just behind the bulge of the chin under the jaw bone. A curb chain or leather curb strap attached to pelham or curb bits fits across the chin groove. Pulling the reins backwards makes the bit rotate forward on the mouth of the horse and tightens the curb strap or chain. As the horse softens his jaw to pressure, the curb strap becomes less tight and hence the reward for the correct response.



U Palate Pressure - The palate is simply the "roof" of the mouth. In order for a bit to come into contact with the palate of a horse, it must have at least 2 inches of elevation. The higher the port, the more pressure. Therefore, no bits affect the palate except the high port leverage bits such as the "spade bit". These bits should only be used by experienced hands because of the sensitivity of the horse's palate.

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- U Bar Pressure - The bars of the horse's mouth are in the space on the lower jaw between the incisors and the molars where the bit rests. Every bit acts on the bars of the mouth. The thickness and smoothness of the mouthpiece determines the severity of the action on the bars. The thinner and more twisted the mouthpiece the more severe the effect.
- U Lip Pressure - All bits put pressure on the horse's lips.
- U Poll Pressure - Leverage bits exert pressure on the poll when the bit rotates in the horse's mouth and pulls down on the headstall.

Reins

There are a variety of reins used in riding depending on the discipline and show guidelines. Always choose a size that feels comfortable in your hands giving you more control and contact with your horse's mouth. In general the smaller the rider's hands, the narrower the reins should be.

English Reins

All English reins buckle to the bit at each side and to each other in the middle.

- U Plain Reins - are flat leather straps which are comfortable to use, but can become slick from rain or sweat.
- U Laced Reins - are constructed of thin leather strips laced through and around the strap of the reins for a better grip.
- U Web Reins - come with either a horizontal loop of leather at intervals or rubber incorporated for grip. They are used in wet weather when leather reins would become slippery. They are made of cotton web with leather at the bit and buckle ends.
- U Rubber Reins - are covered with a pebble surface over the hand grip portion to provide a secure grip.

Western Reins

- U Open or Split Reins - are the most commonly used rein for Western riding, designed with two separate straps which are attached to the bit at one end and left unattached at the other "*rider*" end.
- U Romal or "Closed" Reins - are connected near the "*rider*" end with a flexible quirt. Also known as California Reins.



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- 🐾 **Round Reins** - are usually one continuous strap usually attached to the bit with a snap on one or both sides. Also known as a roping rein.
- 🐾 **Mecate Reins** – used with a bosal or snaffle bit. Reins are made of horsehair or rope (approximately 22 feet long) of which ten feet are made into a continuous (round) rein, leaving 12 feet on one side to use as a lead.

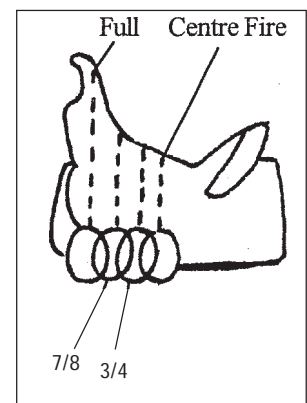
Saddles

Your saddle is an important piece of riding equipment and should be a help to any kind of performance. There are a variety of saddles that may be used when riding. The type will depend on the style of riding and the intended purpose.

The saddle should fit the horse on which it will be used. Horses with high withers or mutton withers may require special fitting. The saddle should be comfortable for the horse as well as the rider.

Riggings of Western Saddles

Western saddles are usually, but not necessarily, double-rigged (two cinches). The positioning of the front cinch is relative to the swells or pommel. This positioning indicates full, 7/8, or 3/4 rigged saddles. The type of rigging your horse needs depends on the conformation of his shoulders. Full rigged saddles tend to place the horn over the centre of balance of the horse (which can be useful for roping) while 3/4 rigging tends to place the rider over the centre of balance of the horse.



Stirrup Styles



Bell stirrups



Oxbow Stirrups



Tapaderos Stirrups



Roper Stirrups

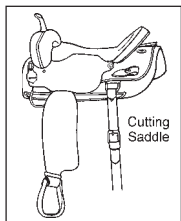
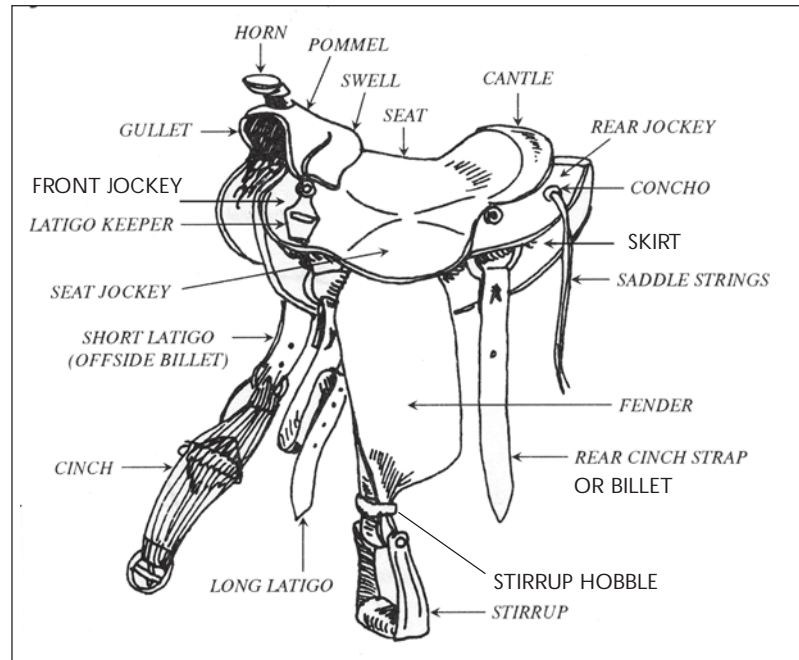


Visalia Stirrups

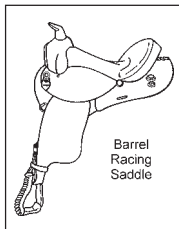


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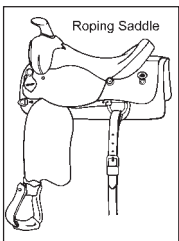
Parts of the Western Saddle



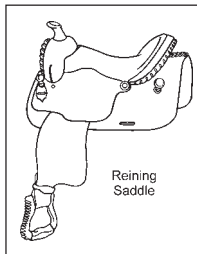
Cutting Saddle



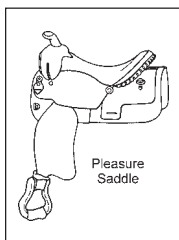
Barrel Racing Saddle



Roping Saddle



Reining Saddle



Pleasure Saddle

Types of Western Saddles

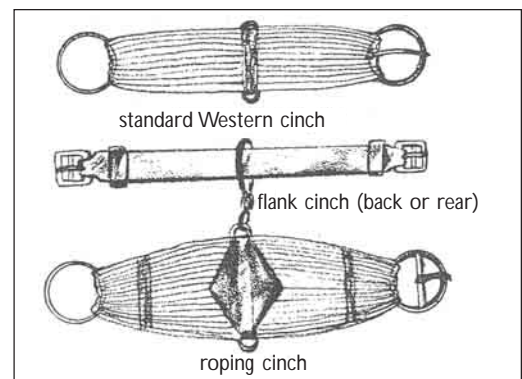
Cutting Saddle - Longer than a general saddle, seat is flatter, cantle is higher, horn is long and slim.

Barrel Racing Saddle - Seat sized for actual rider, cantle is wide and sloped, horn is similar to cutting saddle.

Roping Saddle - Deeper seat, cantle is higher, horn is tall enough and stout enough to hold a rope, fitted to rider for correct comfort and position.

Reining Saddle - Seat is deeper, cantle is higher and wider, horn is lower to moderate height.

Pleasure Saddle - More middle of the road, moderate seat, moderate horn, moderate cantle, fitted for average riders. There are two types of pleasure saddles - recreation and show pleasure.



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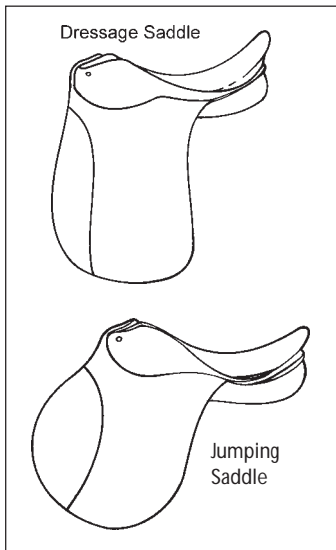
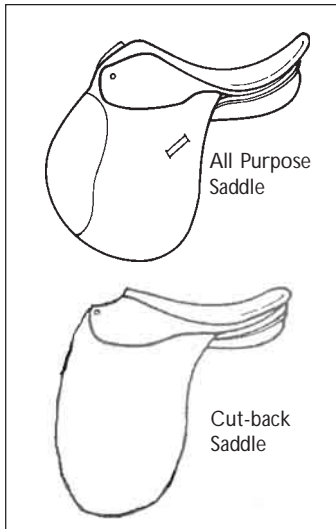
English Saddles

Forward-seat - sets the rider forward, well over the centre of balance of the horse. These saddles are meant for jumping and may have heavy knee rolls which give the rider maximum security. Close-contact forward-seat saddles eliminate the bulky knee roll.

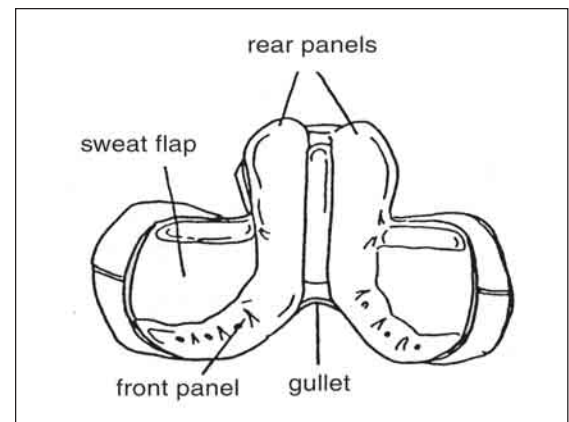
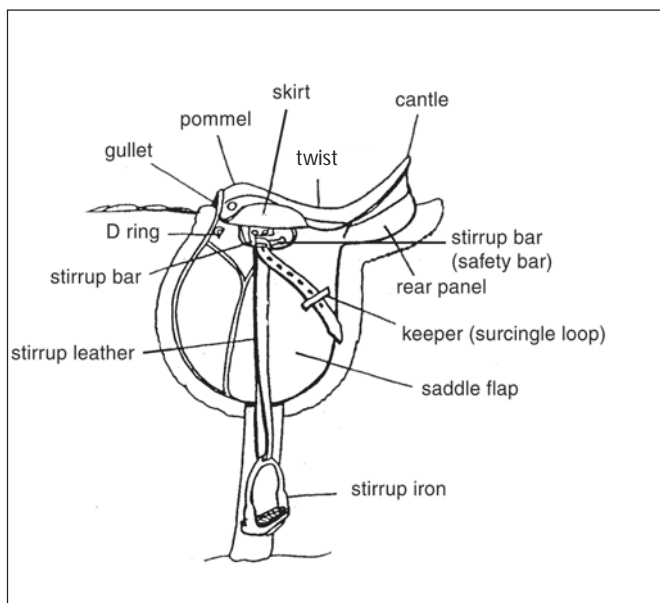
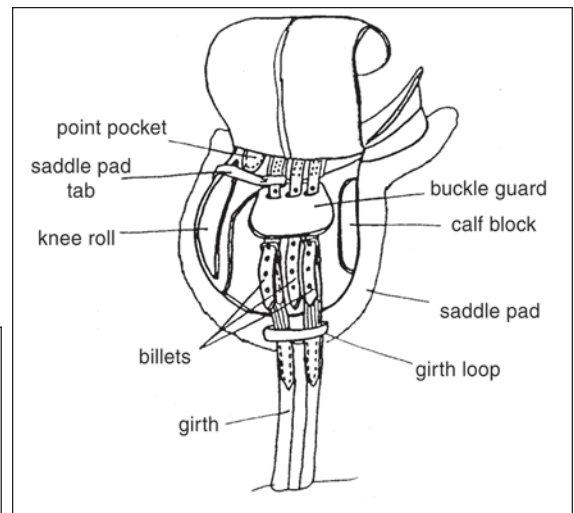
Cut-back - used on gaited horses as well as Morgans and Arabians which move with much animation or lift of the legs. This movement combined with an arched neck and head set tends to move the centre of balance of these horses somewhat further back from where it is normally found.

Dressage - has a deeper seat with leathers positioned under the deepest part of the seat. This allows the rider more exactness of leg position for riding a highly schooled dressage horse.

All purpose - allows the rider to use the same saddle for all kinds of riding. The all purpose seat is probably the best English saddle for the novice as it is the most versatile.

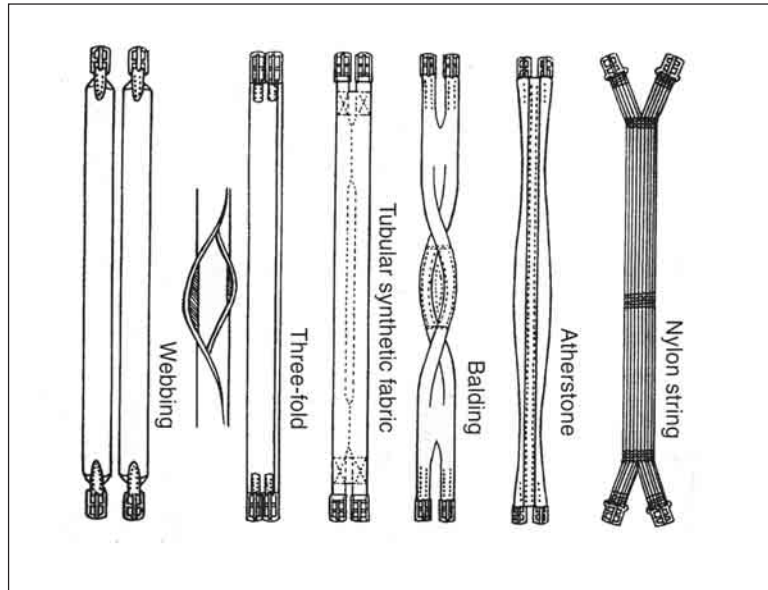


Parts of the English Saddle

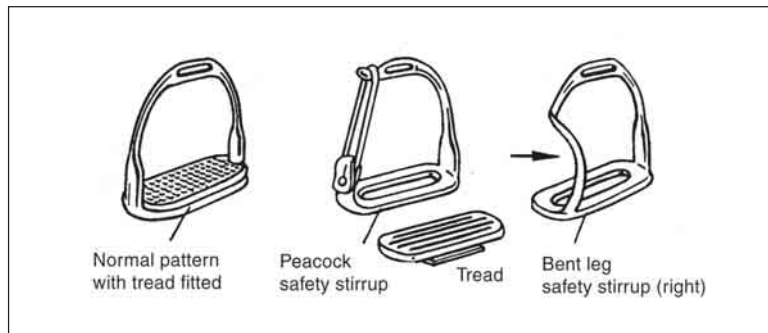


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Girths



Stirrup Irons



Fitting a Saddle to a Horse

A sore horse is often difficult to detect. Often the signs are ignored, believing instead that the horse has developed an attitude, when in fact this change is caused by pain. Shortened strides, switching tail, pinned ears, nervousness and an otherwise mentally preoccupied horse may be signs of poor fitting equipment.

Whether English or Western, a well fitted saddle

- 🐾 is neither too wide, nor too narrow for the horse's shoulders or back.
- 🐾 does not touch any part of the horse's backbone.
- 🐾 rests evenly along the horse's back, with no concentrated areas of pressure.
- 🐾 seems comfortable to the horse.

4 - H H o r s e P r o j e c t M a n u a l - E q u i p m e n t

After considering all the factors that affect saddle fit, you must test models on your horse. Set the saddle without any pads, on your horse's back and check it from the front and the rear. Test that the gullet completely clears the horse's backbone by inserting a long whip through the gullet, from the withers toward the croup. The whip should slip easily through this channel, between the bearing surfaces. Check the saddle's length. Look for the seat to sit level from back to front. The deepest part should remain in the saddle's centre and the pommel and cantle should measure the same height. The pommel must never sit higher than the cantle, as this will shift your weight too far back.

Using appropriate padding can help a saddle fit a horse properly. If the saddle is too high in the pommel/horn area, put padding under the back of the saddle, being careful that the front of the saddle does not come down and rub the horse in the wither area. If the saddle is low in the front and is rubbing the horse on the withers, use a wither pad under the front of the saddle.

Fitting a Saddle to a Rider

Once you have chosen models that fit your horse, choose one that fits you. First, determine the size of seat you need. While mounted in the saddle test if you feel centered. You can check the seat size by placing your hand behind your seat. See if you can fit four fingers between you and the cantle; more or less room may indicate a poor fit. Saddles come with varying widths to the seat which can make a big difference to a rider's comfort. A seat that is too wide can be fatiguing to the hips and thighs but may be necessary for riding a wide horse. An extremely narrow seat can feel as if you are riding a rail. Choose the saddle that feels comfortable to you. One way to determine if a saddle is right for you (assuming it is right for your horse) is to take your feet out of the stirrups while riding and jog your horse for at least 10 minutes. A Western fit includes about 2 fingers between thighs and swells if the stirrups are adjusted properly.



Choose:

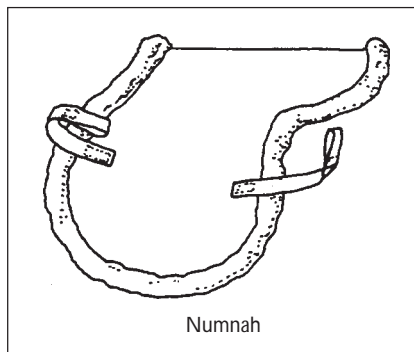
1. A saddle designed for your purpose if possible (reiner, barrel racer, roper, pleasure, etc.)
2. A seat length that positions you as close as possible over the horse's center of gravity (seat length).
3. A seat shape that is made to accommodate your build.

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Fitting a Saddle to a Rider (continued)

4. Use a video or mirror to look at how the saddle positions you.
5. You must sit with a straight pelvis to maintain strength. If your pelvis rotates, your back curves and your shoulders roll ahead, and then you brace against the cantle.
6. You should feel like you are sitting in the saddle and not on the saddle.
7. There should be full contact from your crotch down through your thigh(not able to place your hand under any part of your upper leg).

Saddle Blankets



Saddle blankets or pads are used to protect the horse's back. They also keep the lining of your saddle clean and absorb moisture. Western saddles are heavier, therefore a thicker blanket is often needed. Some saddles may require additional blankets or pads. The use of two Navajo wool blankets is very common in western riding. Blankets or pads made from natural fibres (such as felt or wool) work better than synthetic fibres, but they are more difficult to clean and manage.

Depending on the type of riding done, English saddles will require a full pad (dressage), or a numnah which follows the shape of the saddle.

Both the pad and numnah must be pulled well up into the front arch of the saddle to avoid pressure on the withers. It may be attached to the saddle before tacking up.

On western saddles, consider the length and depth of the saddle skirts. The saddle pad should extend at least one inch both front and back.

Riding Equipment for the Rider

Do not wear running shoes!. Boots are the safest. Boots should be high enough to support the ankle and should have a heel so that the foot cannot slip forward through the stirrup. The sole should be smooth and rigid for comfort and protection.

Wearing a helmet with a chin strap can reduce injury (please see safety section). Helmets that fit under western hats are available.

English riders wear either jodhpurs which cover the legs to just below the

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Riding Equipment for the Rider

(continued)

ankles and are worn with jodhpur boots or breeches which are worn with tall riding boots. Jodhpurs and breeches are made of stretchy material; light colours are worn in the show ring, dark colours are worn for practicing at home.

Riding apparel should be comfortable and not too tight to restrict mounting. Do not wear anything too loose or that dangles (including jewellery) that could spook the horse or get caught on something.

English riders wear pants that are stretchy with no inseams, which permit enough freedom of movement to ride comfortably. Western riders wear jeans or dress pants.

The rider's equipment for competitions is sometimes governed by regional or individual show rules. Check these carefully before any competitions.

Care of Equipment

Storage

All equipment should be stored where it will remain dry and out of the sunlight. Check equipment regularly for deteriorating threads, weak glue and any screws or bolts that are coming out.

Cleaning Saddles

Clean your saddle with a damp, not wet sponge to get all the dirt and salty sweat off. If there are little black patches of greasy dirt called jockeys, scratch these off with a fingernail or a plastic pot scrubber but nothing more abrasive.

Work glycerine saddle soap well into another damp sponge. If you get a lather you are using too much water. Work the saddle soap into all the leather, paying particular attention to the undersides of the flaps and other parts which touch the horse. Use lots of saddle soap and elbow grease. If the saddle has gotten wet or feels stiff, oil it using a product like Lexol or neatsfoot oil before using the saddle soap. Pay particular attention to the underside of the leather where water is more easily absorbed.



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Care of Equipment

(continued)

On English saddles remove the stirrup leathers to clean and oil them. On Western saddles pull the stirrup leathers down a few inches so you can reach in and oil the bend where the leather grips the tree. Do not use saddle soap or oil on suede leather. English saddles should be examined often to see if the stuffing is going flat and making the saddle uncomfortable for the horse's back.

Cleaning Headstalls and Bits

Clean the leather headstall or bridle the same way as the saddle. Ideally both saddle and bridle should be cleaned every time you ride. The bridle, breast collar/breastplate, martingale, leather girth and any other leather piece of tack which lies directly on the horse's skin must be cleaned often because they pick up dirt, grease and salt which stiffens and cracks the leather. Saddles usually have a pad under them and do not get as dirty. Nylon bridles can be washed in the clothes washer with saddle pads and cinches. Rinse well!

Cleaning Saddle Blankets or Pads

Clean blankets are important to protect the back and prevent the spread of disease. When you wash blankets be sure to remove all of the soap because it can irritate the horse's back during the next ride. Not all pads are washable, so brush or vacuum them to remove hair and debris or take them to the drycleaners.

Commonly Used Equipment



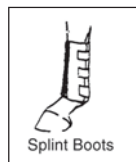
Bell Boots

Bell Boots - bell shaped and made of rubber. A rubber circle that fits the horse from the pastern down over the hoof. They are worn on the front feet to protect the horse from stepping on their heels if they overreach. This type of boot is often used on jumping and gymkhana horses. They also help keep the shoes on. Overreach boots serve the same purpose as bell boots, but are made of different material.



Skid Boots

Skid Boots - protect the fetlocks of the rear legs from hard ground and friction burns when a horse is doing sliding stops, roll backs and spins.

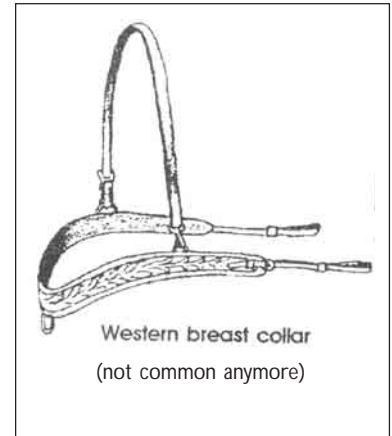
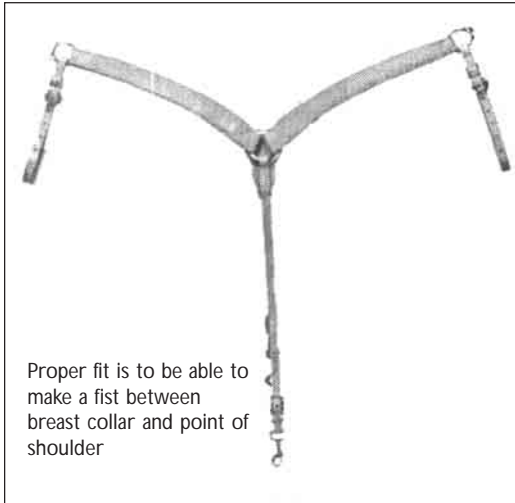


Splint Boots

Splint Boots - used on the front legs to protect the splint bone from accidentally being hit by the other front foot. This type of injury can happen when horses are spinning, working in circles (lunging) or being trained.

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Breast Collar The breast collar is used for some Western riding and for speed events. It helps to balance the saddle in tight turns and keeps it in place during fast acceleration and uphill climbs. It should be v-shaped, as this does not restrict breathing, with the center part attached to the girth. Each end of the breast collar is attached to the D-rings on the saddle.

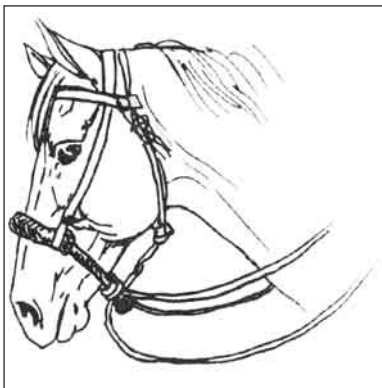


The breast collar in English riding is called the breastplate. It is used to prevent the saddle from sliding back when the horse is moving fast or jumping. It is also helpful for keeping the saddle in place on a round backed horse. Some English and Western breastplates have martingale attachments.

Blankets Blankets are used to keep horses warm in winter and clean when washed and groomed for a show. Sweat sheets and coolers keep horses from getting chilled when they are sweaty and the air is cool. Summer sheets keep horses' coats from sun burning and helps keep the flies at bay.

To figure out the size of blanket your horse wears, measure him from the center of his chest, along the side of his body, straight back to the middle of his tail. If the measurement you get is an odd number round it up. For example if the measurement is 77 inches then round it up to 78 inches.

Hackamore (or Bosal)



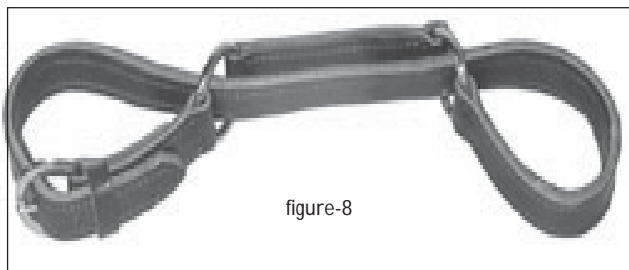
The rawhide bosal hackamore is acceptable for use by 4-H members on a young horse. The mechanical hackamore is not recommended because it is very different and more severe than bosal hackamores. In competitions, check the rules for specifications regarding the use of hackamores.

The bosal hackamore is much the same as using a snaffle bit in that it will not injure the horse's mouth. When the headstall is properly adjusted the bosal should rest on the horse's nose about nine cm (four inches) from the top of the horse's nostrils. The back part of the bosal should hang at the base of the cheekbones. It should also permit the passage of two fingers held edgewise between it and the jaw. Hackamore reins are usually held in two hands.



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Hobbles Hobbles are a rope or leather strap used to tie the front legs together to restrain a horse's movement. Horses are often broke to hobbles when they are trained to ride. They are used to train the horse to stand or to graze a horse outside a pasture without being tied. They can be useful for a horse that paws the ground, trailer or feed tub. Horses that are used to them are also less likely to panic if they become tangled in wire or rope. Get the help or direction of an experienced horseman when hobbling your horse for the first time.

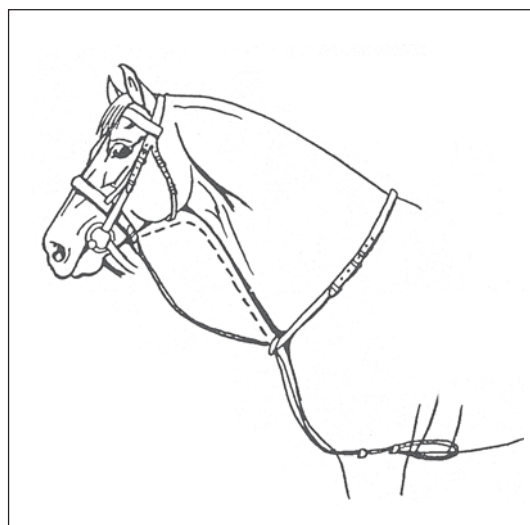


Lunge Line An eight to ten metre rope or web strap used for lunging. Two lunge lines may be used for ground driving a horse. It is safer not to put your hand through the loop at the end. It is safer to remove the loop at the end by cutting the stitching or knotting.



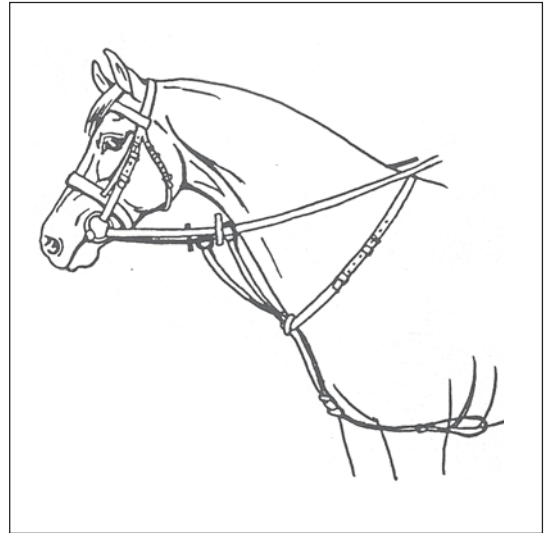
Martingales Martingales and tie-downs are schooling devices that can be used as needed and taken off when the problem has been corrected. They should be adjusted so that they come into play when the horse's head comes out of the correct position. The tie-down runs from the noseband through the ring on the breastcollar, to the cinch between the horse legs and acts in the same manner as a standing martingale.

Standing Martingale - The standing martingale consists of a strap running from the noseband through a neckstrap and down between the front legs to the girth. It should act when the head is too high. Standing martingales must only be used with a cavesson noseband to avoid restricting the breathing or damaging the nose. Many western riders refer to the standing martingale as a "tie-down".



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Running Martingale - The running martingale branches off towards each side of the bit from the neck strap. These branches end in rings through which the reins pass, helping to stop the horse from raising his head too high or throwing it from side to side, and also improving reining. Rein stops (small rubber clogs that the reins slide through) must be fitted to the reins to prevent the martingale rings from catching on the buckles near the bit and making it impossible to release pressure.

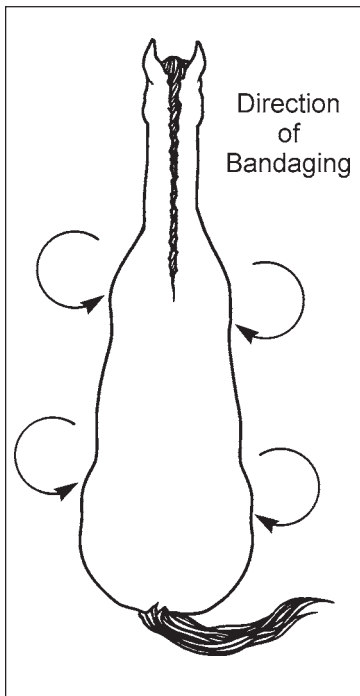


Quirt Small whip used to discipline the horse.

Side Reins Training tool used with a snaffle bit. They are long leather or web straps on each side which attach to the saddle and the bit. They teach the horse to give to the bit and flex over the poll and back. Side reins are only used when lunging. When starting out, side reins should fit very loosely and be gradually tightened as the horse responds to them and builds up neck muscles. They should never be tightened so much that they force the head into position.



Leg Bandages Leg bandages are often used for support or protection. There are a variety of bandaging materials available for use.



Applying a Leg Bandage

When bandaging:

- ⤵ The horse's legs should be completely dry before bandaging. Never apply a wet bandage as it may tighten and cause swelling or chafing.
- ⤵ Bandages must be put on clockwise on the right legs and counter clockwise on the left legs (Inside out, front to back). For a stable bandage apply the cotton or quilt at the back of the leg (edge of the cannon bone) just in front of the tendons. Wrap around the leg, making sure the ending edge of the quilt is not over the tendons. Tuck the end of the outer wrap under the edge of the quilt and begin applying the bandage in the middle. Work your way down to within 1 cm of the bottom of the quilt (down over the fetlock,) then begin working up to within 1 cm of the top of the quilt (just under the knee or hock). The tension of the wrap should be even, so time your pull towards the back at the same place for each wrap.
- ⤵ Bandages applied below the fetlock joint are used for first-aid or for when the horse is not exercising. Bandages applied for support during exercise should not be applied below the fetlock joint because they would interfere with the movement of the joint.
- ⤵ Apply bandages firmly enough that they will not slip or move around, but not so tight that they restrict circulation. You should be able to slip a finger easily under the quilt.
- ⤵ The same person should bandage all the legs on a horse to ensure that all legs are bandaged with equal tension.
- ⤵ Padding is used under shipping and stall bandages but not under exercise bandages.

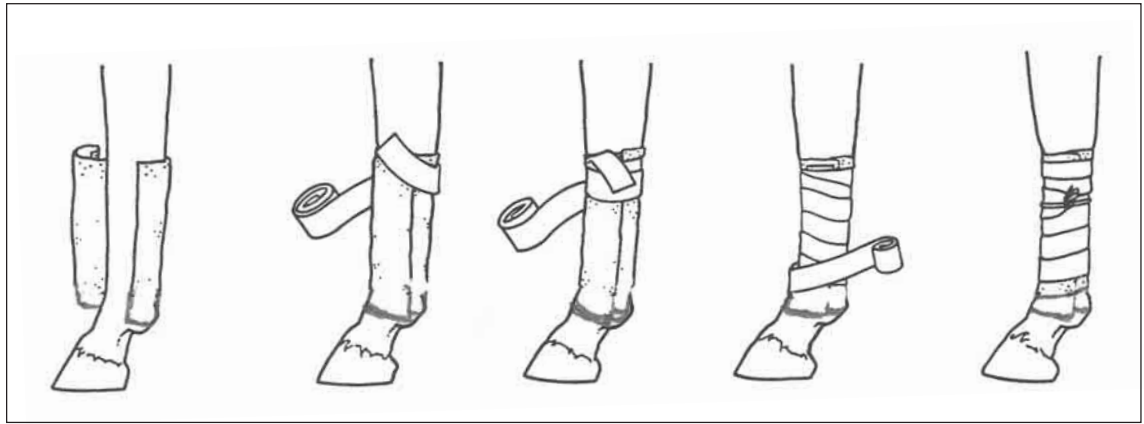
Types of Leg Bandages

Exercise - Exercise wraps are used when the horse is being ridden or lunged to help support and protect the lower leg. Fleece polo wraps are available in a variety of colors. The exercise bandage should be applied from below the knee/hock to the fetlock. Do not wrap too low on the fetlock.

Secure (tape) exercise bandages well so they do not unravel and trip your horse.

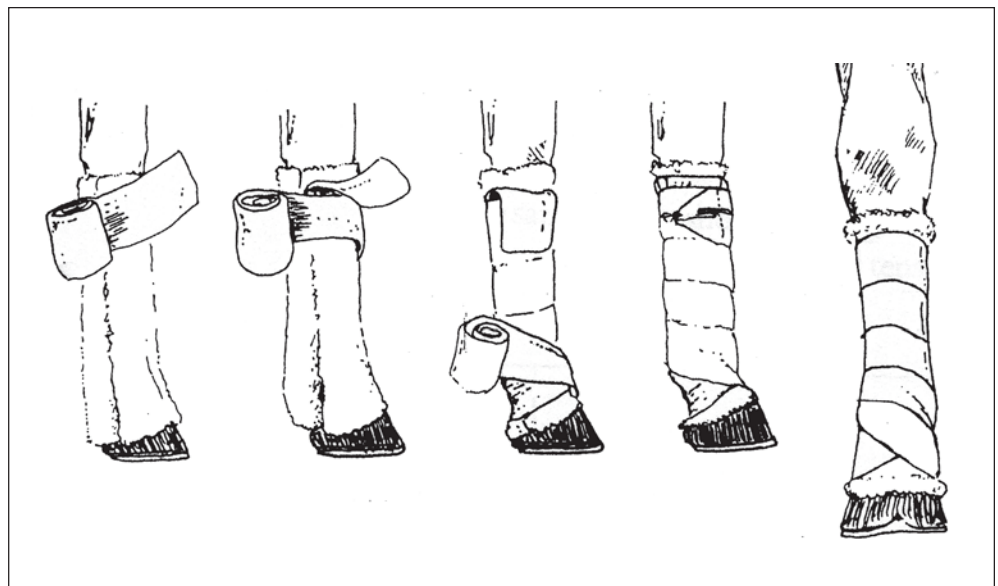
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Stable - A stable bandage is used when a horse is being kept in a stall overnight or for first aid. It often prevents “stocking up”. A long stable wrap should only be used with a quilted pad underneath.



Stable Bandage

Hauling (shipping) - This type of bandage is used for support and protection while the horse is being hauled in a trailer. A thick quilted pad that covers from below the knee/hock to below the coronet band on the front and hind legs is under the long wrap which is at least 12 feet in length.



Hauling Bandage



Tail Wraps

If you want to protect your horse's tail from getting dirty or being rubbed, you can apply a tail wrap. Made from knit or rubber backed material like the neck sweat or similar to a leg wrap (a knitted leg wrap will also work). The tail bone is wrapped to protect the bone and the tail hair from damage when you are trailering. Do not put a tail wrap on too tightly.

- ⓪ Lightly dampen the tail hair with a brush. Do not wet the bandage as the material may shrink thus injuring the tail by cutting off circulation.
- ⓪ Put your left hand under the tail, unroll about 20 cm of bandage; and place this spare piece under the tail, holding its end in your left hand and roll the bandage in your right hand.
- ⓪ Keep your left hand on the root of the tail until the spare end is secured. The first turn is often difficult to keep in place, try making the next turn above the first. Put pieces of hair into the wrap to prevent slippage.
- ⓪ Unroll the bandage evenly around and downwards, stopping just above or below the tail bone.
- ⓪ Tie the tapes neatly - no tighter than the tension of the bandage. Tuck in the spare ends, then bend the tail back in a comfortable position.

