

## Tack Awareness

These checks are only intended as a general guide. ALWAYS seek professional advice especially on the fit and balance of your saddle. Our aim is to give you awareness that will benefit you and your horse.

### The Saddle

MAKE sure that your saddle has full contact along the panels with your horse's back. Check this without the numnah.

When using a numnah make sure it's not pulling down tight across the withers and make sure it overlaps at least one inch around the saddle.

Check the flocking in the panels of your saddle to make sure there are NO uneven areas. It should be smooth and flat.

Make sure when the horse is girthed that there is at least 2 to 3 fingers clearance between the pommel of the saddle and the wither of the horse.

Your saddle should be serviced and your flocking checked every 6 to 12 months. If you have a young horse or a remedial fit the servicing should be more frequent.

When riding always look down to make sure that your saddle is sitting symmetrically and NOT sitting to one side. If it does sit to one side check for:

YOU and Your horse are symmetrical and your horse doesn't have muscle wastage

That the flocking has not compacted on one side more than the other

That the saddle has bedded into the horse correctly and not moving over to one side and unbalancing the rider

You have uneven stirrup leathers or a one sided elasticated girth causing a problem

If creases appear in the seat this could be a sign of a weak, broken or twisted tree.

### Girths

We recommend that you always use a girth that is elasticated both ends, in the middle or no elastic at all.

When girthing up always go from side to side, going up one hole at a time. This ensures the saddle is being pulled down evenly.

Check that you have the correct size girth. About 3 holes up each side on the girth straps is about the normal.

### Stirrup Leathers

Swap your leathers from side to side weekly. If you don't do this the leather on your mounting side tends to stretch more than the other.

Make sure your stirrup leathers are even, just because they are on the same numbered hole each side doesn't mean that they are level.

Make sure that your stirrup bar toggle is ALWAYS in a down position when riding.

Also make sure that your stirrup leathers can slide on and off without too much effort. If it is difficult to do you may need your stirrup bars lifted. Not only will this help if you fall from the horse this will also take stirrup bar pressure away from the horse. Please use a qualified person if this is needed.

Make sure you have at least half an inch clearance either side of your foot when in the stirrup iron.

