

## **POMMEL FITTING**

### **Regular Pommel Size/Colour**

- XS = Red
- S = Blue
- M = Grey
- L = Green
- XL = Orange

### **Soft Pommel**

- Small (saddles under 14")
- Large (saddles 14" & over)

### **Pommel Types**

- English
- Western (with horn)



## **Position of the Pommel**

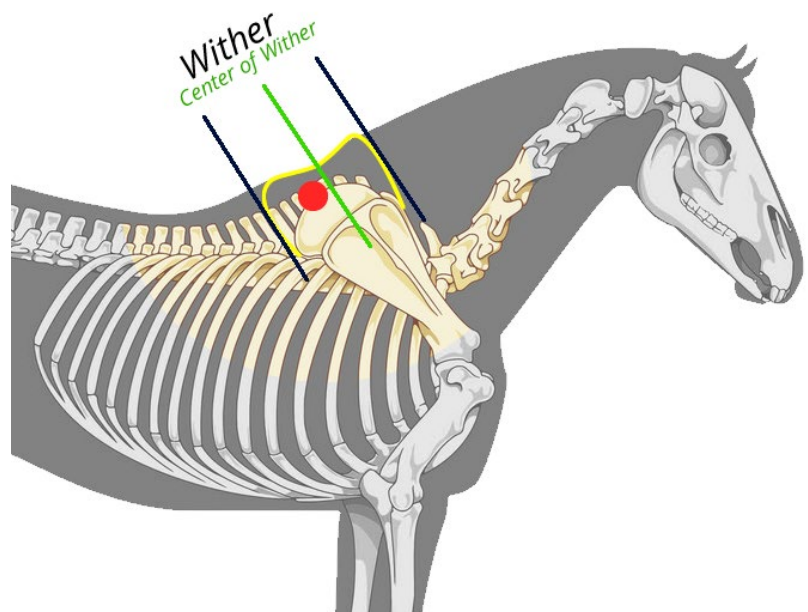
The pommel should sit just behind the central line of the wither.

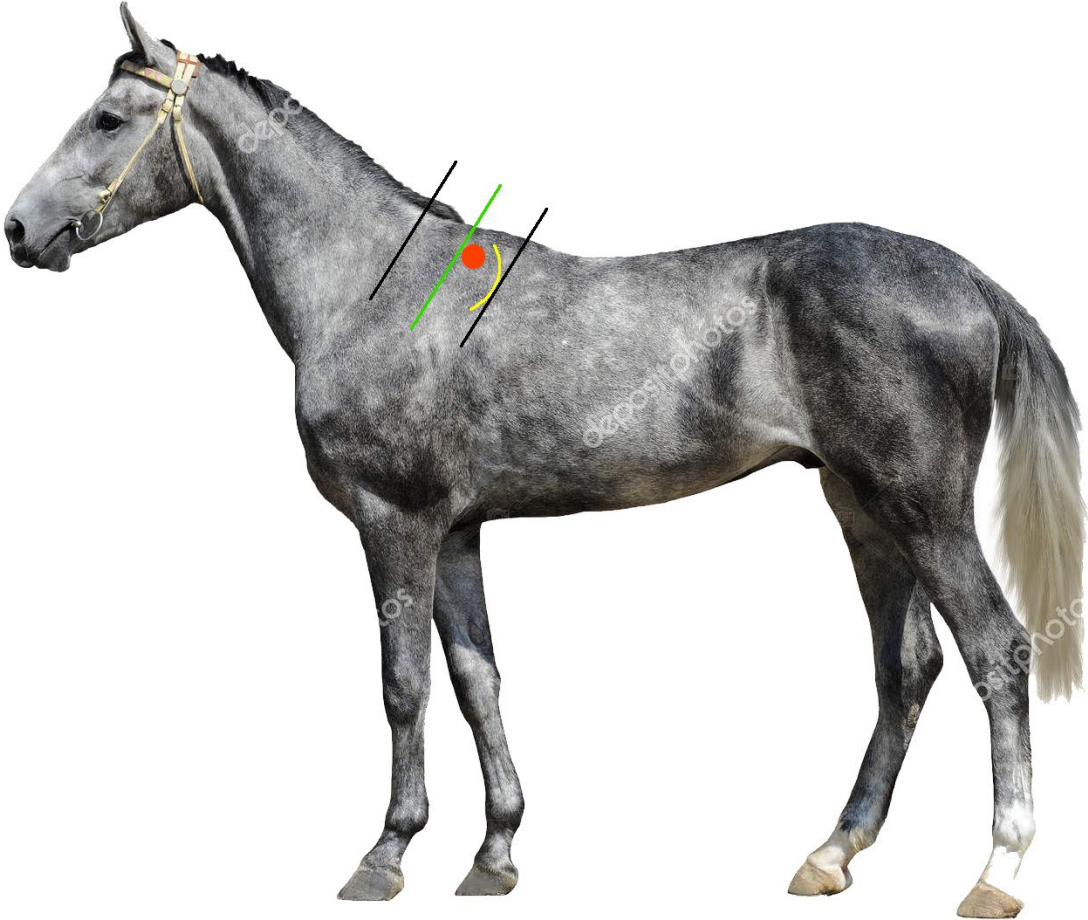
Unlike treed saddles, which sit behind the shoulder, the treeless saddle will sit over the shoulder allowing for free movement. This is only possible because there is no tree.

A treed saddle should not be fitted in the same position.

### **Instructions to find the centre of the wither.**

- First use your hand to feel in front, around and behind the shoulder.
- This area of the shoulder blade is called wither, it is helpful if you can mark in chalk.
- Mark the central point between the two at the top of the shoulder
- The pommel placing is just behind this centre line.









### **High Wither Fit**

These horse types are the most difficult to fit. In cases where none of the fibreglass pommels fit, it would be advisable to use a soft pommel.

The other difficulty which arises is that the saddle is pommel high. To counter balance this, use additional 3Mesh shims in the rear pockets of an 8-pocket pad. If the saddle slips backwards, one way to counter this is to use a chest plate.



### **X Wide Fit**

If you experience that the X wide is too narrow, then it would be advisable to use a soft pommel combined with 3Mesh in a 2-pocket pad.

## **Pommel Facing**

There is a right and wrong way for the pommel to face. The inside width at the front of the pommel is wider than the back.



The 2 important areas to check include:

### **Clearance**

A minimum of 2-3 finger gap (photo 2 red line) between the wither and the pommel.

### **Contact**

The surface of the pommel end should lay flat against the horse. If only part of the pommel's end surface contacts the horse, then this would exert greater pressure on the small area and could lead to soreness.

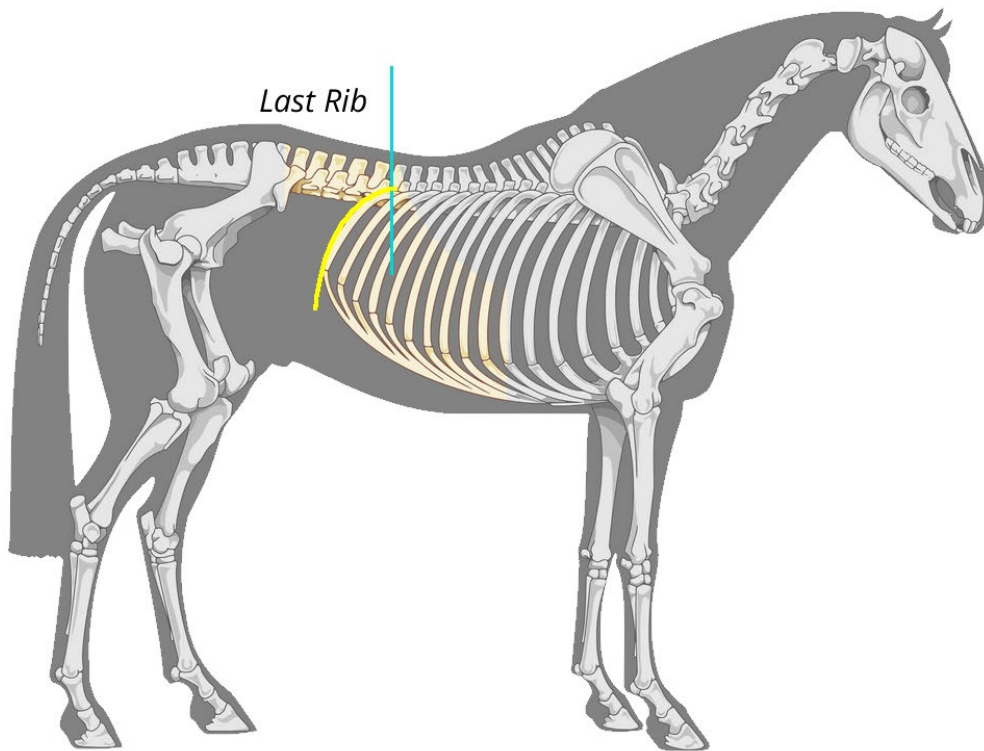
It is important to look at the pommel from all angles.

## **Saddle Length**

### **The Last Rib**

Look at the way the hair on your horse's flank comes together from opposite directions. If you feel for the last rib and follow the curve to the spine, you will find the last of the supportive vertebrae.

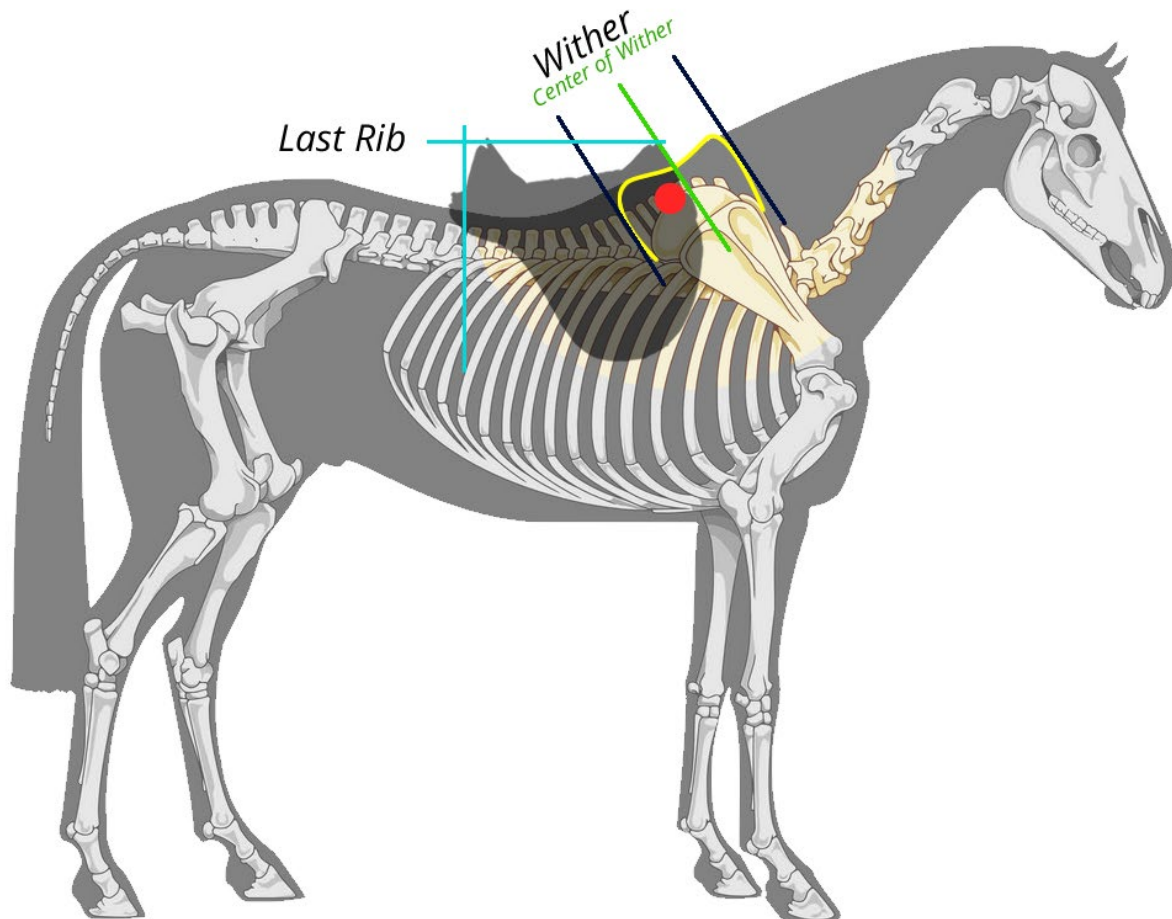
**It is important that the seat area of your saddle does not exceed this area.**





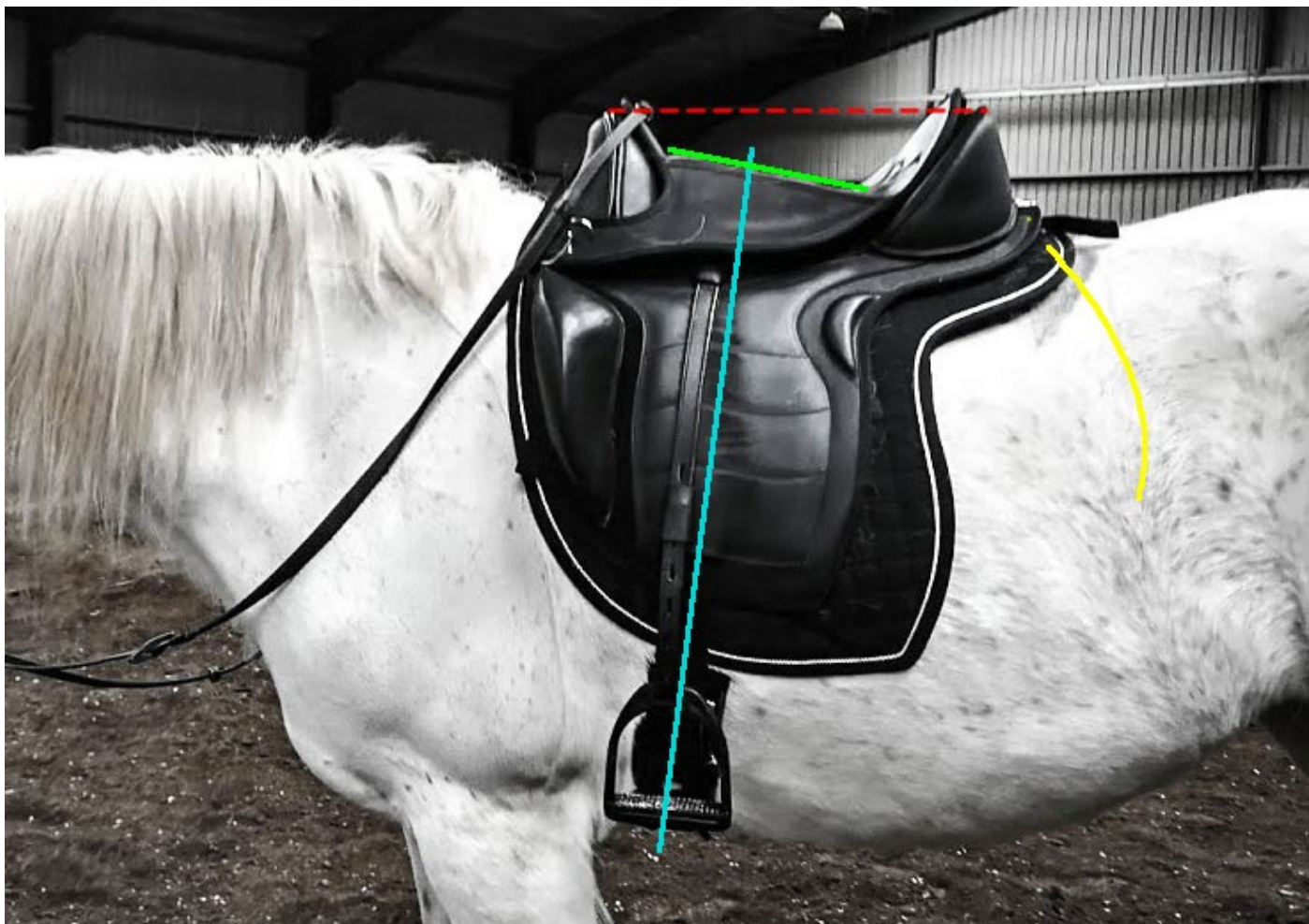
## Saddle Position

Insert your pommel in to the saddle and position the saddle alone on the horses back.



This is an example of a poor saddle fit.

The saddle is too large, with the seat over the last rib, and the girth is also strained. The positives are that the green line on the seat shows correct balance of the pommel being high, but not higher than the cantle and the blue line indicates the stirrup is balanced.



Here is an example of better saddle fit. The saddle could be situated a couple of inches further forwards so that the pommel is situated correctly. The pommel is level with the cantle.

The saddle is comfortably within the last rib, the girth is sitting much straighter and the stirrup is over the girth and only slightly off centre.

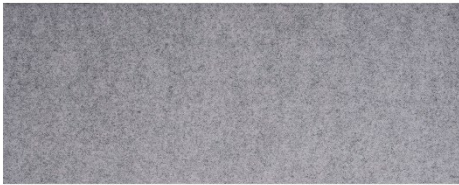
Ideally, we would like the stirrup to be more central, but in the test of riding, the rider felt good balance and was not tipped.

## Inserts



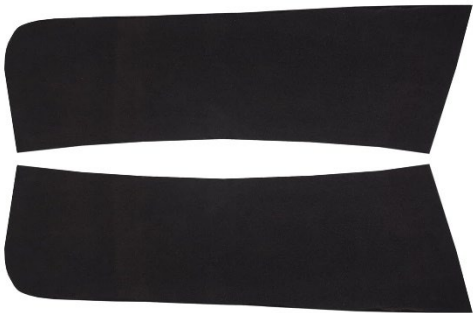
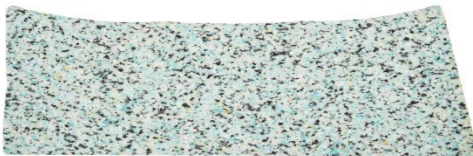
Felt pads are breathable, heat regulating and moisture absorbing. They have a light pressure distributing capacity and are supplied per set.

Depth: 10 mm



The universal EDIX® Poly-Press inserts are made of composite foam, have a light pressure distributing capacity and are supplied per set.

Depth: 15mm



Neoprene pads offer sustainable quality, good adaptability to the horse's back and compressed to a very limited extent under pressure

Depth: 15 mm



The EDIX® 3 Mesh inserts have a high degree of shock-absorbing and adapt to the anatomy yet have the ability to return to the original state. A very high-quality, durable pressure-distributing material with an open cell structure. The honey grade structure guarantees optimum ventilation even when loaded, in all directions.

You can test the resilience by taking the material between two flat hands and then applying pressure with equal flat hands. The material will not last or you cannot press it flat.

This load is comparable to the load that we issue with our seat on the saddle or riding bareback and indirectly via the 3 mesh on the horse's back.

Depth: 22mm





## **Using Inserts to Counter-Balance**

For common issues where physical problems are ruled out, we can use inserts to support the horse and rider for correct balance as part of rehabilitation of the muscles.

In this example we see a horse that has mild a-symmetrical muscle mass and may need additional layer of padding on the near side.

If in doubt, check with the horse's bodyworker for advice.

## **Conformational Challenges**



Sometimes, we face conformational challenges that require a keen eye and understanding of equine anatomy. This could include horses with a-symmetrical muscle mass (common), hollow shoulder and high wither.

It is impossible to tell you from a photograph exactly how to fit, because the movement of the horse is also important. To check the horse is free from lameness or stiffness. In some instances, it is best to recommend a client seek a bodyworker or vet before proceeding with a saddle fit. You must use knowledge and judgement for this.

## **Scarring (Necrosis)**

If you notice white hairs on the horse's back, it would be important to check your saddle.

Scarring is a strong indication of poor saddle fit as the current or previous saddle is putting too much strain and pressure to the wither, usually this happens when a saddle is too wide. This could mean that the horse feels sore or may have tight muscles. If in doubt refer client to a bodyworker.

