

WHEN I GET MY NEW CUSTOM MADE CAPRICE-DRESSAGE SADDLE...

Dear customer, we kindly ask you to review and follow these instructions carefully to break in the new saddle.

- 1. Please put the saddle the first time without the saddle pad on your horse.**
- 2. Slide with your left hand over the shoulder blade in the direction of the horse's back and find the end of the shoulder blade.**
- 3. Place the saddle 2 fingers wide after the shoulder blade.**
- 4. If you now look at the saddle on the horse you will think that the saddle sits too high on the horse's back. This is because the wool stuffing is very soft and voluminous. The cushions have to adjust now on the horse's back. To reach this point you have to carefully follow our advice.**
- 5. A very important point is # 3, the saddle has to be placed 2 fingers wide after the shoulder blade so that the saddle can slide on to the shoulder during the break in riding phase.**
- 6. You can see, that our girth is curved. In the middle of the girth you can find the word Front. Fasten the girth, that the word Front faces the head of the horse.**
- 7. The girth has to be placed into the last holes of the billet straps on the right hand side of the horse.**
- 8. On the left hand side of your horse, fasten the girth only slightly.**
- 9. To keep the girth in the perfect position you can adjust the back billet strap with the Delcro triangle band. (Since Model 2005)**

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- 10. Open the Velcro and loosen up the band. With this action the back billet strap will be looser. If you pull on the band, the back billet strap will be tighter. The ideal position for the horse is if the back billet strap is a little bit looser in comparison to the front billet strap (circa 5-9mm). With this we will bring the movement of the horse from the backhand to the girth and not onto the shoulder.**
- 11. You have to do this kind of procedure on the left hand side as also on the right hand side of your saddle.**
- 12. After a certain use, the billet straps will stretch. That means the billet straps will be longer.**
- 13. It is absolutely necessary that you check the position of the billet straps weekly and if necessary, you have to adjust them with the velcro triangle band.**
- 14. Now you check if the saddle still sits 2 fingers wide from the shoulder blade, if yes, you can tighten the saddle lightly again on the left and right side, depends on the horse's body shape.**
- 15. To mount the horse, please use a mounting block. The best situation is, if somebody else holds on the stirrup on the other side.**
- 16. When you sit in the saddle, please immediately tighten the girth on both sides (minimum 2 to 4 holes, depends on the body weight of the rider).**
- 17. Please adjust the stirrups that your thigh is in the correct position behind the knee roll.**
- 18. After 10 to 15 minutes in walk, please tighten the girth again. (Minimum 1 hole).**

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19. Now you are ready to ride 10 to 15 minutes in slow trot.
20. Before you try to canter, please check again that the saddle fits tight against the horse. If not, please tighten the girth again. (Minimum 1 hole).
21. Now you are ready to canter/gallop.
22. We highly recommend that you do not sit the trot or the canter for the first hour, due to fact that the cushions have not yet finished molding/adjusting after 30 to 45 minutes on the horse's back.
23. When you are finished with riding and before you take off the saddle you have to check again the girth like in position 9 and 11.
24. When you now take the saddle off of the horse, and you check the imprint of the saddle cushions on your horse's back, the front cushion edge has to be positioned about 3cm (1.2") onto the shoulder blade.
25. **THIS IS THE PERFECT POSITION OF THE SADDLE. ONLY SO IS THE SADDLE IRON POSITIONED ON THE END OF THE SHOULDER BLADE!**
26. That means with 2 fingers wide after the shoulder blade, the saddle moved forward 5-6cm (2-2.2"). This is the ideal saddle position. Only so can the saddle cushion absorb the pressure of the saddle iron and with this effect it will not handicap the shoulder movement of the horse.
27. If the saddle still moved to far onto the shoulder, then you tighten the girth not enough or much too late (Or the saddle was positioned too far onto the shoulder at the beginning).

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Very Important:

You cannot sit a trot or canter when the girth is improperly tightened. This will create a lot of pressure on the horse's shoulder.

A horse cannot loosen up the forehead, if the saddle sits too far forward on the horse's shoulder.

For the Caprice dressage saddle, you cannot use an elastic girth! It is not possible to tighten an elastic girth perfectly and the saddle will never be still on the horse's back. WE DO NOT WARRANTY OUR SADDLES IF YOU USE/RIDE WITH ELASTIC GIRTHS.

For horses that hold their breath while tightening the girth, you have to tighten the girth with a lot of patience, hole by hole. You can only tighten the girth really tight when the rider sits in the saddle.

The billet straps are made out of leather and they will stretch. It is absolutely necessary that you check the positions of the billet straps after points 10 and 11 on a weekly basis!