

## TACK AND EQUIPMENT & ITS CARE

An owner of a horse needs equipment with which to use or work the animal in the desired duty. Etiquette has been built up in the use of a horse so that a definite pattern of tack is used according to the use of the animal. Tack and equipment can run into a lot of money. Good sound tack can be procured by careful selection. The simpler a horse is rigged, the more comfort to the horse and the rider. Accessories such as tie-downs, martingales have a place but lead to the suspicion that the horse has bad habits. Therefore, if your horse does not head toss, rear, or lag on the bit, forget them. The only place for fancy, highly trimmed dangles, etc. is on a parade horse. A horse well trained with a good mouth can be ridden with the minimum of equipment.

### SELECTION AND CARE OF LEATHER

Many 4-H members purchase used equipment. Leather is perishable yet it can be taken care of in such a manner to give years of service. In buying any piece of leather goods, study it for strength, pliability and service. Certain items as stirrup straps should be sound and have sufficient strength to hold one's weight in any period of stress. Inspect each item carefully, particularly around buckles, bends and attachments. Leather which is stiff or dried out cracks and is very brittle. Thin areas designate that the leather is worn and therefore not as strong as the maker intended. Leather tears or rips around the tongue of buckles. On all stitching be sure it has life. Dried thread at stitchings is very weak and can lead to trouble. Leather should be kept dry and clean. Sponging after use to remove the dirt and sweat is very important. Use saddle soap or leather oil to keep leather pliable. A system whereby you can hang your tack is best. A dry area where air circulates is best. A stable is a poor place for leather because of dampness and the ammonia liberated from the manure. Never, no matter how wet leather gets, place it near heat. Use Neats Foot oil or vaseline to get softness into the leather. Good glycerine or special soft soaps are available and are cheap in comparison to the replacement of parts. Regular cleaning and inspection add to the use and life of any leather article.

### GROOMING SUPPLIES

The character of an individual is often judged on how well his animal looks. A dirty, shaggy looking animal designates that the owner is shiftless, lazy and does not pay attention to details. Whenever you put your animal to work he is on exhibition. It does not matter if you are just going to the store or to a show. Appearance is the first essential.

Curry combs come in many styles, such as rubber, metal, square, round, and it is a matter of personal preference.

Curry combs should be used with sufficient pressure to get the job done. Be careful on parts which are not heavily muscled. The curry comb roughs up the hair in order to get the deep dirt and dandruff.

Rice straw brushes are stiff and if used in a rocking stroke will penetrate the hair and lift out the dirt. Many owners depend only on a rice straw brush and can present a well groomed animal.

Body brushes are a finishing brush. They are not intended for getting out deep dirt. Usually, they are made of hair. Therefore, they are softer and tend to bring the oil into the hair adding gloss and bloom to the coat. Rubbing cloths are used to further enhance the bloom and remove the last particles of dirt. A good woolen rub cloth should be washed frequently to keep it sweet, clean and soft.

Scrapers are essential if one washes his horse. They help a lot if you have really sweated a horse up. Never, by an intent of purpose, put a horse away when sweated. Cool out your horse before stabling. This is one reason why you should walk your horse home the last half mile of your ride.

Hoof picks are a very essential item. The hoof is a prime feature of a horse. To let manure collect in the foot leads to thrush and other difficulties. The collection of stones and gravel in and about the frog can soon lead to lameness. Keep a healthy foot on your horse. A hoof should contain moisture to stay pliable.



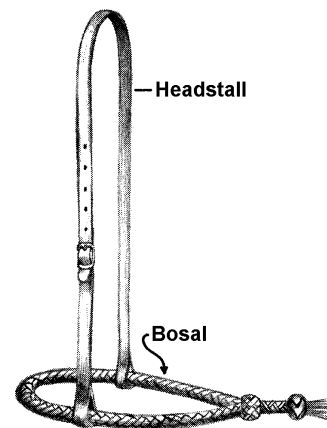
A dried out hoof does not have springiness to absorb the shock which could injure the whole leg. Hoof dressings are available to those that have to keep a horse housed. Horses on pasture run in the dew or streams which aids materially in keeping the hoof in good condition. Mane combs can also be used in the tail to keep them untangled and free flowing. Shears may be required to trim the foretop, roach the mane, trim the ears, head and legs. The type of horse you own dictates where you trim. Under no circumstances clip all the hair on the inside of the ear. Nature put this hair there as a protection. Keep it that way but trim it attractively.

**BRIDLES**

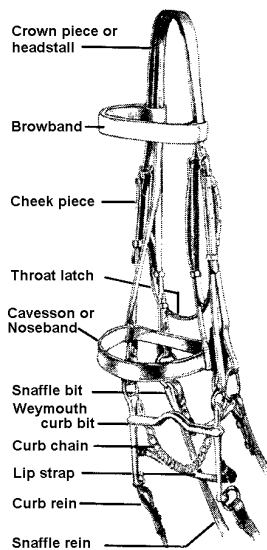
Bridles come in many styles. Each style calls for a special complement of bits. Here is where the etiquette begins. We do not use a driving bit in any saddle horse bridle. We do not, likewise, use English type bits in a Western bridle or vice versa. Depending whether you ride English, Hunt, or Western there is a definite pattern to follow in rigging your horse.

The reins, bits and headstall compose the bridle. The different types of bridles commonly used are the Western, Snaffle, Pelham, Walking Horse and Weymouth or double bridle. The Western bridle has long cheek pieces. They are often wide and curved in various shapes. It has one set of reins and may have curb straps. The double bridle is most commonly used on three and five-gaited horses for bridle path and show. It is composed of the snaffle and curb bits. On each end of the bit are large rings where the reins are attached. The

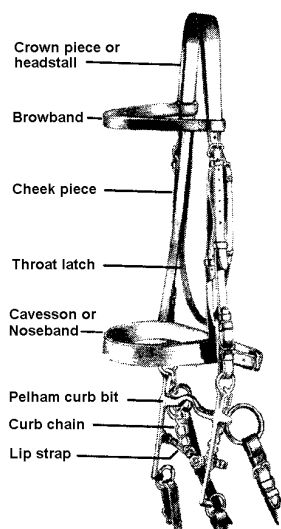
snaffle bridle is a single bit bridle commonly used for hunting, jumping, or trail riding. The reins and cheek pieces of the hunting snaffle bridle are sewn into rings of the bit for safety. There is only one set of reins and they are plaited to prevent them from slipping through the fingers. The Pelham bridle is used for polo, hunting, park, and country riding. It has a single bit with double reins. The bit might be described as a combination of the curb and snaffle bits. The Walking Horse bridle is similar to that used for the Western type horse. It has one set of reins with a Walking Horse curb bit. The bit may have a slightly curved bar which fits between six and nine inch cheek pieces. The cheeks are often curved and the rein fits on the lower end of the cheeks giving leverage. The longer shank or cheek piece helps raise the



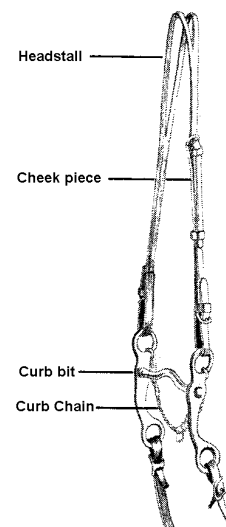
**BOSAL HACKAMORE:  
POPULAR FOR BREAKING  
HORSES**



**WEYMOUTH BRIDLE**



**PELHAM, DOUBLE-REINED BRIDLE**



**SPLIT-EARED BRIDLE  
WITH CURB BIT**

head and maintain the gait. The hackamore has one set of reins and an ordinary headstall that holds a braided rawhide or rope noseband with a knot-like arrangement under the horse's jaw. A hackamore can be used to control and train a young horse without injuring his mouth. A properly adjusted hackamore rests on the horse's nose, about 4 inches from the top of the nostrils or on the base of the cheek bones.

### SADDLES

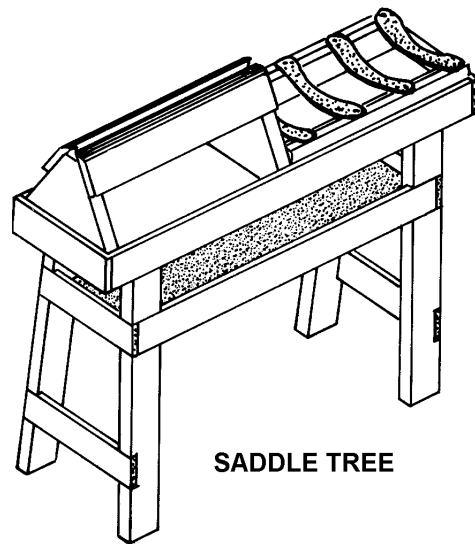
Saddles come also in many styles. The saddle indicates the style of riding you are doing. This is more true than the type of your animal. Some horses look better tacked one way than they would in another type of gear.

A saddle should have a spread in its tree to fit comfortably on the withers of your horse. A poor fitting saddle can cause sores. A poor fitting saddle can also roll on mounting and dismounting. For the comfort of both you and your mount, pay strict attention as to the tree. Your horse may require a narrow, high tree or it may do best with a cut back. Regardless, seek some advice and don't use just any saddle.

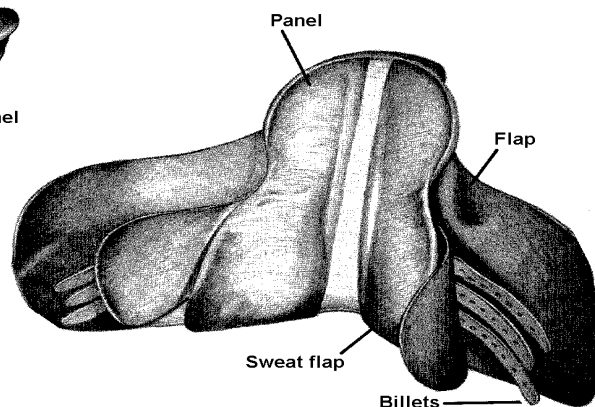
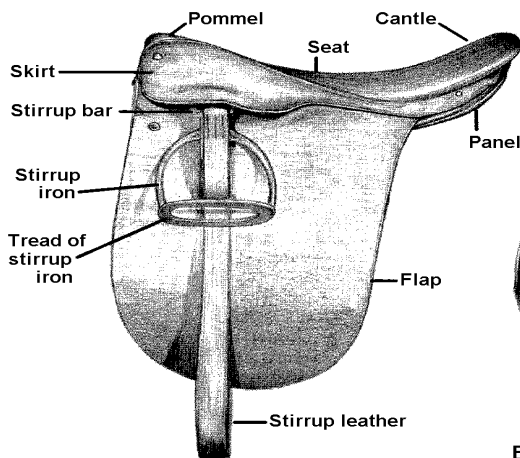
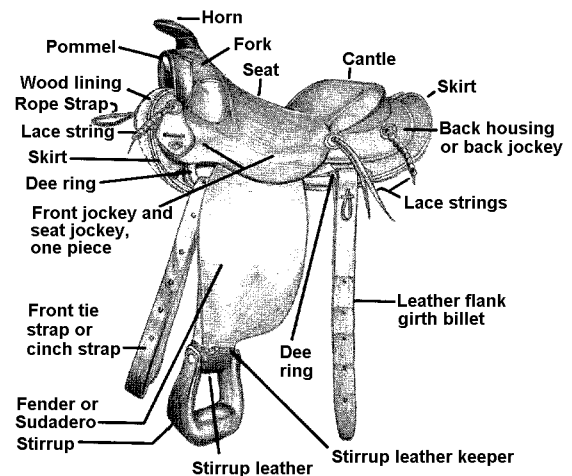
A saddle should be light and pliable in order that you can use your leg aids to advantage. A new saddle takes time to get broken in whereby one can best get his signals across to the mount.

Pay strict attention to the seat. This must fit you. To get a proper seat, the length and depth must be suitable. A good rider cannot look good if the saddle does not provide comfort.

Stirrup hangings are placed in various positions on saddles. Be sure that the stirrups hang so that you can get full weight in them. Stirrups set forward throw one into the cantle. Stirrups set back throw one into the



SADDLE TREE



ENGLISH SADDLE

pommel or fork. A rider must feel at home to enjoy his ride. If you are not secure in the saddle, your horse knows it and is not likely to give you his best.

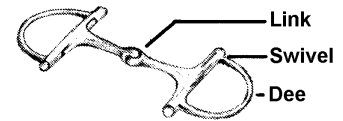
**SADDLE TREE**

The saddle tree shown here has many advantages. Besides holding the saddle when not in use, it can be used to properly clean your saddle. Note, you set the saddle on one end to store. To clean the under side of the saddle just tip it over into the U at the other end. The tray makes a convenient and neat place to store supplies. Some horsemen prefer to suspend western saddles from an overhead pole or rafter through the saddle fork or around the horn.

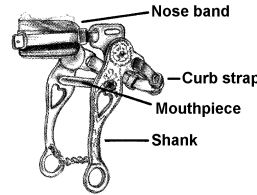
**BITS**

Bits are made in various styles. Each was designed for a definite purpose. Much injury can be done to the tender bars of the horse's mouth with bits and heavy hands. The bit is just one of your aids. A rider sends a message from his hands down the reins to the horse's mouth. Reins and bits are not necessarily the emergency brake found on an automobile. The slightest movement of a finger or dropping or raising of the wrist should carry your intent to your mount.

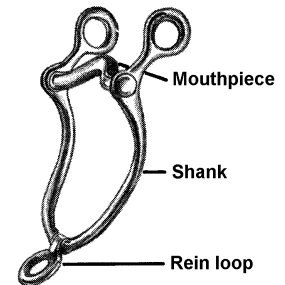
Straight, jointed and ported bits are found everywhere. Select a hit of the proper length of mouth piece to fit your horse. Adjust the bridle so that the bit just raises the corner of the mouth. In this position the bit will rest on the bars of the mouth. Try the simplest first and if this does not do the job, try another. Short and long shanked curb bits are available. A long shanked heavily parted or spaded bit is not essential. English curb bits are fitted with a flat curb chain. Western bits utilize a flat strap for their curbs. During cold weather remove the frost in the bit by warming it before placing in the horse's mouth.



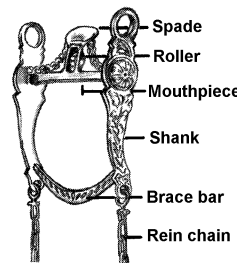
DEE RACE BIT:  
OFTEN USED ON  
THOROUGHBRED



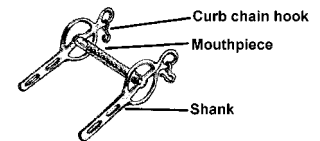
HACKAMORE BIT:  
USED ON MOST COW  
PONIES



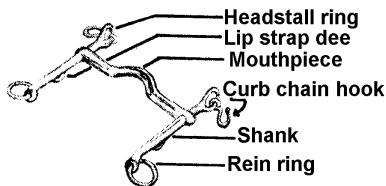
ROPER CURVED CHEEK BIT:  
USED ON MANY ROPING  
HORSES



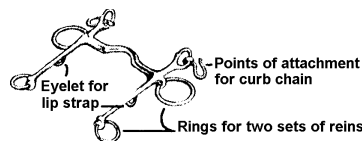
SPADE MOUTH BIT:  
USED ON MANY STOCK  
HORSES



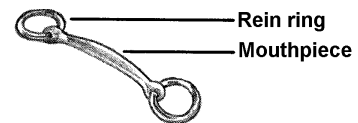
LIVERPOOL BIT:  
A CURB BIT USED ON  
HEAVY HARNESS HORSES



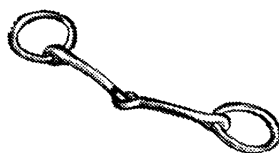
WEYMOUTH CURB BIT



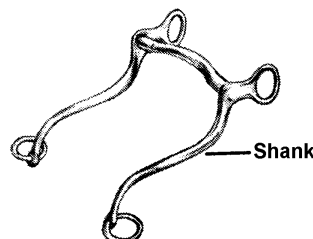
PELHAM CURB BIT



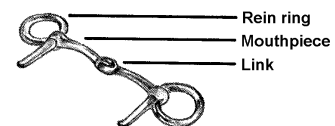
BAR BIT: USED ON TROTTING  
HARNESS HORSES, WHICH  
CARRY CHECK REINS AND ARE  
DRIVEN WITH STRONG HAND



SNAFFLE BIT



WALKING HORSE BIT



HALF-CHEEK SNAFFLE BIT USED  
ON HARNESS RACE HORSES,  
ROADSTERS AND FINE  
HARNESS HORSES