



TACK ASSESSMENTS

Heart In Hand Equine Specialty

Tack is one of the leading external factors that contribute to body dysfunction and discomfort with horses. I assess both english and western tack. Oftentimes, it's beneficial to have a pen, notepad and camera available for these sessions.

SADDLE ASSESSMENTS

Saddle assessments include a thorough step-by-step assessment of your horse's back. This is to leave you confident in locating and knowing your horse's individual load-bearing area. Assessments also include visual representation of this load bearing area using livestock-safe cattle markers. We then discuss some saddle anatomy and how your current saddle relates to the horse's back without even putting the saddle on yet. We will also cover how to physically assess your saddle on the horse's back and how to use the feedback given by our palpation. Determined at time of the assessment, if the saddle is safe - we will continue to include pad, rigging and also do a dynamic fit of the saddle with and without a rider. Again, determined at the time of assessment you will also get three custom moulds of your horse's back to assist in finding another saddle. *I do not replace a saddle fitter and do not do any saddle repairs.*

HEAD GEAR ASSESSMENTS

While there is lots of awareness around saddle fit, it's common that head gear doesn't get the same attention. An improperly fit bridle, hackamore, halter or bit can wreak just as much havoc on the body as an ill fitting saddle. If it is suspected that head tossing, head shyness, cranial dysfunction is caused by tack, we will take a further look into head gear.



SADDLE PADS, BLANKETS AND SHIMS

This could probably be a more taboo and controversial topic than saddle fit! Haha! Through my education and +20 years experience, this really matters. All too often, owners suspect their saddle may not fit right - so they add more padding. This causes even greater pressure points on the horse's back and usually changes the fit of the saddle for the worse. I personally don't like shims or shimmable pads and will often not even entertain them for "trying to help a saddle fit." I strive for the amount of padding that will benefit the horse. A good general rule is if your pad is 1 inch or thicker - your saddle probably isn't fitting and you're over padding. Some professionals may disagree, but my only goal is to advocate for the integrity of the horse's back and to facilitate a place of optimum healing and health.