



Tack Explained: English Saddle

The English saddle can seem pretty simple, but there are actually way more parts underneath the surface that us tack makers need to replicate to get a nice finished product. Let's start exploring:

All saddles have a saddle tree, which is the core of the saddle. It forms the sturdy seat. This can be made from a range of materials, which include metal, plastic and even but not very often wood! The tree looks like this:

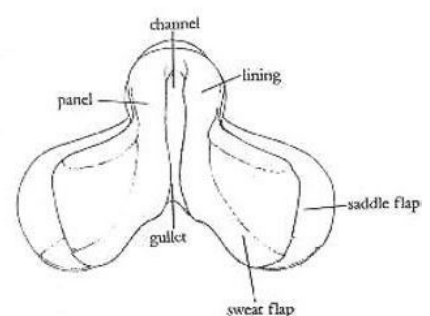
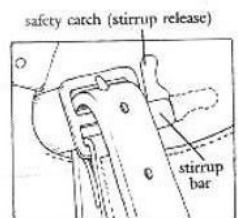


Plastic, metal and synthetic saddle trees.



The tree is padded, and covered with leather (or on a synthetic saddle, fabric) and then the saddle flaps are attached. The outer saddle flaps cover the horse's sides, and have knee rolls (and sometimes thigh rolls) for the rider's leg to comfortably sit in. Also, the stirrup leathers are attached to the stirrup bar in the saddle tree, and hang down the saddle flaps, with the stirrup irons on the end. If you flip out the outer saddle flap, there is another flap underneath, called the sweat flap, which is where you attach the girth. The girth buckles onto two/three leather straps that sit underneath the saddle tree called billets. The girth (which actually is a separate piece which can come off completely) then buckles onto the billets. This is why some instructors say to tighten the girth one hole on one side, another hold on the other side, to keep the girth even. This is the basic structure of the saddle, but all the different pieces of leather which cover the saddle have names too.

Let's start at the tree. On top of the padding, the leather that covers it is called the seat. The high part over the horse's withers is called the pommel (more prominent on the Western saddle) and the high part at the back is called the cantle. This is all basically one piece of leather. Covering the stirrup clip and making the saddle tree and flap join look neater is the skirt. This is a piece of leather that on the top follows the curve of the seat, and is shaped accordingly to the saddle on the bottom. On the bottom of the cantle is the panel, which supports the saddle and helps it keep its shape. The panels extend the full length of the tree, and continue round to pad the knee rolls.





A nice all purpose saddle with red girth & breastcollar attached// Love this one, absolutely beautiful!



Nice English saddle with lovely seat and clean cut straps



Another amazing saddle, love the girth & stirrups // Coloured knee rolls and seat on this one





A real English saddle! On



and off the horse!

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PICTURES:

Tree: Google

Digrams: 1. Alice Jordan 2. Google

Reference: 1. Willow Creek Model Horse tack, 2. Braymire Custom Saddlery, 3. Nichelle Jones, Desktop Stables 4. CK Tiny Tack 5. Creator N/A 5. Fasttackuk.com 6. N/A 7. The Pony Saddle Company

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