

## CRUPPER

- **Try it on and introduce it to the pony without the rider**
- Cruppers may be used for all activities and must be correctly fitted
- It should be put on after the saddle is girthed up
- Make sure all hairs are pulled through crupper and are lying flat
- Take care that the crupper lies well to the top of the dock
- Allow a clenched fist between back strap and pony's back
- Check for rubs around the tail base
- Leather must be kept clean and soft/supple
- Can be uncomfortable for the pony if the top of the tail has been clipped/shaved



Useful if saddle tends to slip forward. Goes under the tail, and is attached to a special dee at the back of the saddle. Check that this dee doesn't press on the pony's spine.



The tail loop on the cheaper versions may be a piece of soft, folded leather. On the more expensive varieties it is a hollow leather pad filled with crushed linseed which when warmed by the horse's body heat, releases oil through the loop, thus reducing the chance of it causing a sore by rubbing the dock.

## GIRTHS

- Girths come in many shapes and varieties of materials including leather, synthetic, anti-gall, webbing, string, nylon etc.
  - Girths must have two or three buckles and *be fastened on the front and middle, or front and back, girth straps.*
  - **If a single buckle girth is being used, then a surcingle MUST be used.**
  - Girths must be kept clean of sweat, dirt and hair. Check also that the girth area on the horse/pony is clean of dried sweat and mud which is liable to cause galls.
  - The girth buckles should be on approximately the same height of holes on both sides of the saddle. There should always be a few holes spare i.e. the girth must not be on the top holes of the girth straps or on the first or second holes.
  - Remember that the horse must be allowed to breathe, and that the girth shouldn't be so tight that a person's fingers can't get between the horse and the girth comfortably when the rider is mounted.
  - Run fingers down between the girth and the horse's skin to check the skin is lying smoothly.
  - Always check the girth when 'preparing to mount' and at intervals during the riding session.
  - If using a girth sleeve (cover), make sure that any seam is on the outside.
  - **If using a girth with elastic on one side**
    - It is recommended that the elastic be on the off (right hand) side
    - and that when the rider is in the saddle, the girth should only be tightened on the side opposite to the elastic
- If the girth is tightened on the elastic side from on top – two things could happen
- it is likely the girth will be over-tightened and
  - the elastic will be stretched and the saddle will be pulled over to that side.

Dressage girths (short ones) need care when fitting. Sometimes, the very long girth straps designed for the rider's comfort, can cause discomfort to the horse by allowing the buckle to come into contact with the horse's elbow.

