



days at
Dunrovin

June 2019

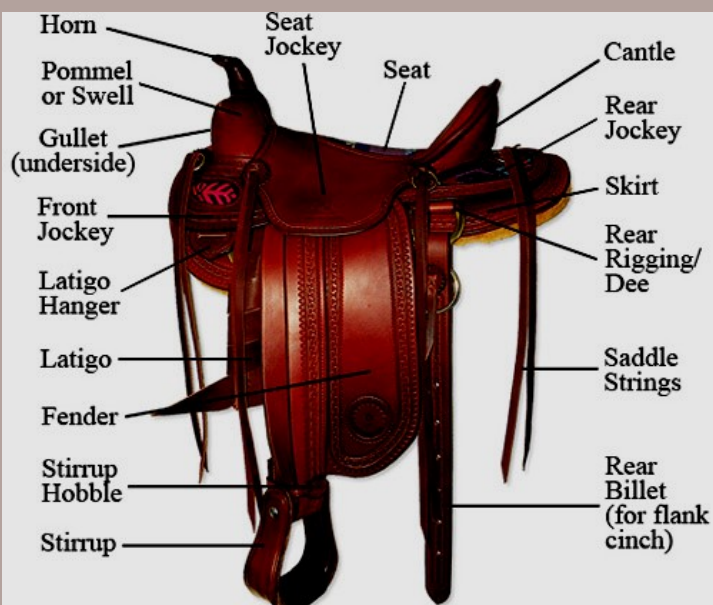


**Ranch
Talk**



The Proper Saddle Makes A Big Difference

When you watch our guides and staff saddle the horses for a trail ride or riding lesson, you may notice some odd behavior on their part—hands and fingers under the saddle, between parts of the saddle, and stepping away and eyeing the saddle from the front and from behind. They are making sure that the saddle fits the horse, and it is a crucial part of horse care at Dunrovin. A good saddle fit makes for a happier horse. A poor saddle fit affects not only the immediate comfort of the horse while they are being ridden, but it impacts their longevity as a working animal and their overall health and wellbeing long past their life as a riding horse.



Dunrovin uses Western-style saddles, both for the comfort of the rider, its sturdiness, and for the utility it provides. Western saddles are designed to be used by cowboys who spend all day out in the country, performing various tasks. They can't run back to the ranch every time they need something, so they carry it all with them!

Saddles are not one-size-fits-all. Each horse is an individual athlete, and just as an athlete wears a certain shoe and a particular type of athletic attire, so must a horse. Imagine an Olympic runner wearing a shoe that's too small or too stiff and that pinches them right where they need comfort and support. That athlete would not be able to perform to the very best of their ability—and they would be very irritable, as well.

The Right Saddle For The Job—And The Horse

Dunrovin has a different saddle for each of our horses, and the fit of the saddle must be assessed each and every time for optimal fit. A horse's back changes as the busy riding season progresses, with muscles developing over time. So then, the saddle may need to be changed to another or the pad that goes under the saddle may need to be padded differently so the saddle properly rests on the horse's back. Important, too, is where the saddle rests in relation to their shoulder and their hip bone.



The shoulder must be free to move from front to back. Dunrovin uses Tennessee Walking Horses, and the range of motion of their shoulders is substantially greater than other breeds, so saddle placement at the shoulder is critical. Also, the saddle must not extend beyond their hip to avoid rubbing the hip bone. We also take note of how high the saddle clears their high withers (the backbone at the base of the neck).



Broadcast Date: Tuesday, June 4 Time: 2:00 PM

Location: _____