

Rod Nikkel Saddle Trees

Problem	Tree/Horse Interaction	The Horse	The Tree	The Saddle	Padding, Tack and Saddling Technique	The Rider
Saddle constantly moves from side to side	Shape of bars doesn't match shape of horse Wrong width or angle Incorrect twist	Barrel Shaped Excessive fat	Tree broken Excessive crown Incorrect twist Different bar shapes	Rigging uneven	Excessive padding Slippery blankets Cinch too loose	Unbalanced rider
Saddle goes consistently to one side		Built asymmetrically	Bars set at different angles Tree warped Tree broken Different bar shapes	Rigging built asymmetrically Rigging put on tree asymmetrically Rigging stretched unevenly Seat not level Holes in stirrup leather uneven Stirrup leathers stretched unevenly	Stirrups adjusted unevenly Pads uneven thickness Other equipment uneven More weight carried on one side – saddle bag contents, canteens, etc.	Rider carries more weight on one pin bone or one stirrup Stirrups set unevenly Different length legs
Withers contact saddle	Inadequate gullet height Tree too wide	Excessively tall withers Withers that extend back a long way	Thick or bulgy gullet Too wide at front compared to back Broken fork	Loose nails under gullet		
Interference with shoulder movement, short striding	Front of bar too large for wither pocket area	Laid back shoulder blades Bulgy shoulders Muscle atrophy behind shoulders Downhill build	Excessively long bar tips No relief built into front bar tip	Improperly blocked skirts Full rigging position	Saddle held too far forward with breast collar	Rider consistently leans forward
Dry spots, etc. under front bar pad	Bar pad and wither pocket not the same shape Wrong width Wrong angle	Fat horses Very muscular horses, especially stallions Downhill build	Excessive crown Different amounts of crown between bars Lumps and bumps Broken tree	Screws, nails, etc. causing lumps Rigging asymmetrical Rigging pulls only on front of saddle	Saddle held too far forward with breast collar Excessive padding Cinching too tight for too long Dirty blankets Wrinkles in blankets Uneven thickness pads	Rider carries more weight on one side
Dry spots, etc. under centre of bar	Too much rock for this horse	Extremely flat back Asymmetrical build	Arizona bars Broken tree Twist doesn't occur far enough forward Lumps and bumps		Dirty blankets Wrinkles in blankets	
Dry spots, etc. under back bar pad	Tree bridging	Excessive rock in back Asymmetrical build	Bar too flat Inadequate surface area Cantle too close to back of bar Lumps or bumps Broken tree	Seat built to throw rider's weight to the back Screws, nails, etc. causing lumps	Dirty blankets Wrinkles in blankets	Rider position with weight far back into cantle
Dry spots, etc. at and behind back bar tip	Tree bridging	Excessive rock in back Steep rise towards croup	Poor back bar tip relief Inadequate surface area Cantle too close to back of bar Different bar lengths	Improperly blocked skirts Seat built to throw rider's weight to the back Skirts lacing holding down skirts at the back Lumps under skirts	Dirty blankets Wrinkles in blankets	Rider position with weight far back into cantle
Problems at the bottom edge of the bar	Angle too narrow Width extremely narrow	Extremely flat (side to side) back	Not enough relief on bottom edge of bar "Self adjusting" pack trees Broken tree		Excessive padding making a good fit too narrow	
Problems at the top edge of the bar	Angle too flat Tree excessively wide	Extremely narrow back	Broken tree	Upper edge of skirts too low		

Rod Nikkel Saddle Trees