

## Total Saddle Fit - Shoulder Relief Girth – FAQs

### **How does the Shoulder Relief Girth/Cinch work?**

The Shoulder Relief Girth actually changes the position and angle of the billets to prevent the saddle from interfering with the shoulder. The center of the girth is set forward to sit in the horse's natural girth groove. While the sides of the girth are cut back to meet the billets 2 inches behind where the horse's natural girth groove lies. This brings the billets from angling forward, to becoming perpendicular to the ground, which reduces the saddle's tendency to be pulled forward into the shoulders.

The secondary benefit is that it gives extra elbow clearance and comfort.

### **How do I measure and fit the Shoulder Relief Girth/Cinch?**

All of our girths measure true to size buckle-end to buckle-end. For **dressage**, we suggest a gap of 4 - 6 inches from the bottom of the flap to the end of the girth. That gap can be larger on **monoflap jump** saddles, at 6 - 8 inches. The spacing suggestion does not apply to any saddle that uses a long (AP/Jump) girth. For **Western** saddles, we target approximately 8 inches from the rigging to the cinch.

### **Why not just set the saddle farther back when tacking up?**

After a few minutes of riding, a saddle will shift forward to the position the girth is pulling it. The Shoulder Relief Girth actually changes the billet line and angle to keep the saddle from being pulled forward.

### **How is it different than a regular contoured/anatomical girth?**

The Shoulder Relief Girth actually affects saddle fit. It has a deep offset between the center and the buckles, which allows the girth to sit in the horse's natural girth groove while allowing the buckles to attach farther back, thus preventing the saddle from being pulled into the shoulders. However it does share the elbow freedom/comfort feature of an anatomical girth.

### **Do I still need a Shoulder Relief Girth if my saddle fits perfectly?**

In many cases yes, because if the horse has a forward girth groove even a perfectly fitting saddle can be pulled forward by a regular straight girth. It is a matter of physics, and the Shoulder Relief Girth will straighten out the billet line to prevent this from happening. There is also the elbow comfort feature which gives clearance around the elbows.

### **Do the buckles have elastic?**

Yes for all English and no for the Western cinch.

