GENERAL INFORMATION ON TREES

The saddle tree is the foundation of a good saddle. The tree shape determines what the finished saddle will look like. Suprisingly there is little or no information available fto explain the differences of the various types of trees found in todays' saddles. We hope that this guide will help in explaining exactly what it is you are buying. It is written for the novice as well as the expert.

The saddle maker's great challenge is to build a saddle that fits both the horse or mule and the rider. We here at Colorado Saddlery pride ourselves on accomplishing this goal. Our trees are the foundation that allows us to do this. We use only top quality trees whose design has been proven to fit a wide variety of horses and mules. When it comes to making sure that one of our saddles will fit an individual horse we try our best to provide all the necessary information so that you can make an informed decision. Some of the terms and definitions needed to make the decision easier are:

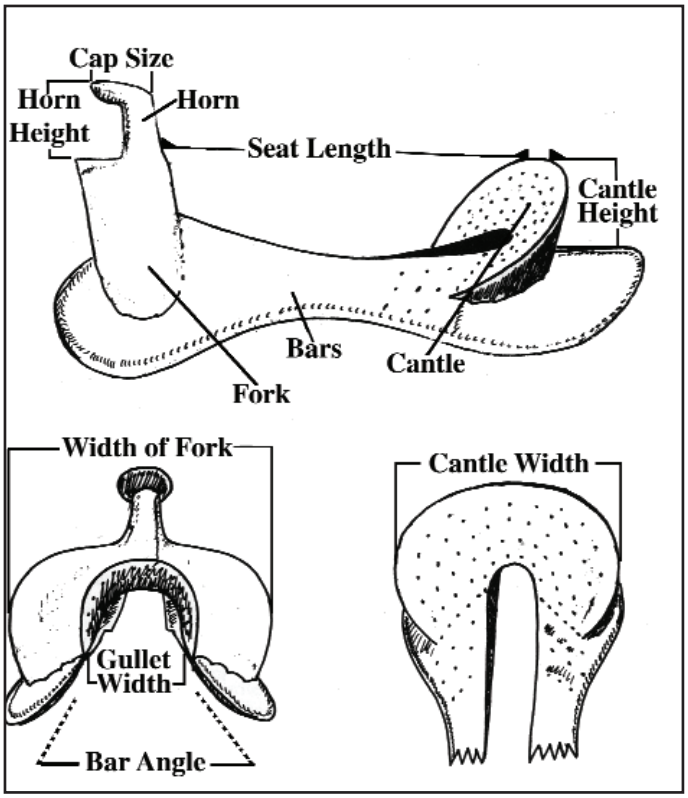
- ***Horse Bars:*** The bars of our horse trees are curved to fit evenly from the withers, back over the ribs and up onto the loin of the horse. The front of the bars is flared to allow for free shoulder action.
- ***Mule Bars:*** The bars of our mule trees are flatter and curve less to fit evenly along the mule's back. The front of the bar is flared to allow for free shoulder action.
- ***Bar Angle:*** The bar angle is the degree that the front of the bar slopes away from the fork or pommel of the tree. After many years of careful observation we feel that the 45 degree angle fits the widest possible number of horses.
- ***Full Quarter Horse Bars:*** This means that the distance between the bars at the base of the swell or pommel is 7".
- ***Semi Quarter Horse Bars***: This means that the distance between the bars at the base of the swell or pommel is 6½ ".

The trees we use in our saddles have all been inspected and meet our strict specifications. The designs have all been field tested to insure that they fit well and will hold up under the hardest, roughest conditions that a cowboy can throw at them. The wood used in our trees is all straight grain and has been specially selected to offer strength with the right flexibilty needed in a traditional saddle tree. The covering, whether rawhide, Tuff-Coat or fiberglass has been selected to give the greatest strength and durabilty.

If you should ever need a tree to check for fit or quality please call us and we can arrange for a tree to be shipped with a return policy in place.

MEASUREMENTS

This is a ***general*** guide for how a saddle tree is measured.



TREE MATERIALS

There seem to be saddle trees made of new materials on the market every day. The following are the "basics". These are the types of trees that we use in Colorado Saddlery Saddles.

Rawhide CoveredTree

This is the "original" style of tree. The tree is constructed of wood and covered with rawhide which is stitched around the wood parts. This type of tree can be used for any purpose.

Tuff-Coat Coated Tree

This style of tree is constructed of wood and sprayed with a special coating of Tuff-Coat polyurethane. Tuff-Coat coating is the same material used for spraying in truck bed linings. The added bonus is that the wood is completely protected from moisture and there is no stitching. It is extremely strong and durable and decreases the weight of the tree. It can be used for any type of riding.

Equi-Fit or Fiberglass Covered Tree

This style of tree is constructed of wood and covered with fiberglass. It is strong and durable and decreases the weight of the tree. It can be used for any type of riding.

New & Improved Ralide® Tree

Ralide® are molded trees of a specialized, rugged type of polyethylene. The new and improved Ralide trees provide the correct fit while the flexibility allows movement away from pressure points giving a comfortable saddle to horse and rider. These trees aren't reccommended for roping.