

How to Measure for a Bridle

Bridles from various manufacturers will fit your horse differently, and his own particular conformation may make one bridle more comfortable for him to wear than another. Here are some considerations to bear in mind as you measure for and choose a bridle.

Snaffle bridles are available in four main sizes: pony, cob, full and oversize. If you're shopping for a bridle and you're unsure of your horse's size, you can estimate the required size based on your horse's halter size. For example, if he fits perfectly into a full or regular horse sized halter, he will probably fit a full sized bridle.

Another alternative is to borrow a bridle to try on your horse, and choose your new bridle depending on how the borrowed one fits. For example, if you borrow a full sized bridle and it is a bit too big when adjusted, choose a cob sized bridle. (For help adjusting the bridle, refer to the topic, "How to Adjust a Snaffle Bridle.")

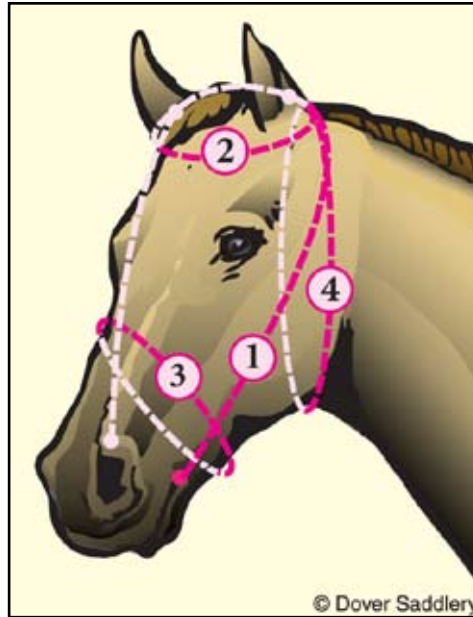
If neither of these methods are an option, you can measure your horse for a bridle using a soft fabric measuring tape with inch increments, and compare your measurements to the bridle specifications.

Tip: Leather bridle parts may stretch slightly over time with use and conditioning. Factor possible slight stretching into your sizing decision as you select a bridle so that you can be sure it won't become too big for your horse.



Note: Most bridles come with reins that are styled to match the bridle. A variety of reins in brown and black and with different widths are sold separately. If you would like to have an extra set of reins on hand, or if you prefer a style that is different from the kind that came with your bridle, you'll find plenty of reins to choose from. Consider these types:

- traditional laced reins
- plain reins
- leather reins with leather stops
- easy-care web reins
- extra-grippy rubber reins
- rubber-lined reins



Refer to the illustration for help identifying the bridle parts to measure.

- 1 Measure the length of crownpiece (with cheek pieces) you require.

Measure from one corner of your horse's mouth, over the poll, to the other corner of his mouth.

- 2 Measure the length of browband you require.

Measure from the back edge of the horse's ear, around his forehead, to the back edge of his other ear.

- 3 Measure the length of noseband you require.

Measure around your horse's muzzle at a point about one inch below his cheekbones.

- 4 Measure the length of throatlatch you require.

Measure from back of your horse's ear, under his throat, to the back of his other ear.

Helpful Tips:

Bear in mind that some bridle manufacturers, particularly German and French makers, produce roomier bridles than others. The difference in size may mean that if you have a horse that fits on the smaller end of full size, you may be able to move down to a cob size. Conversely, if your horse is wavering between full and oversized, you can most likely stick with a full size in a German or French made bridle.

Also, horses themselves present challenges due to breed-specific conformation and for this reason additional bridle pieces are available. For example, many Morgans have short faces that lead one to select a cob size bridle, but their wide foreheads then require a full sized browband. To accommodate such conformation issues, some manufacturers produce breed-specific bridles, such as Collegiate's Quarter Horse sized bridles. These bridles are designed for the Quarter Horses with foundation-type heads – wide at the top but with a narrow, refined nose. It can be difficult to fit this type of Quarter Horse into either a standard full or cob bridle.

Browbands and bridle parts can be purchased individually.

Related Topics

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