



Shore Riders Pony Club

The Bridle; Parts Purpose and Fit



(USPC D Manual p286, Created by SRPC, Delmarva, 2012)

General Information:

- 1) Purpose of the bridle: used to communicate with your horse and it is the main source of control of your horse.
- 2) Come in 4 sizes: pony, cob, horse, large horse. (based on the average size of the horse's head)
- 3) Two primary types of English bridles: Single and Double. Beginning riders use a Single bridle.
 - a. A single has how many bits, and how many sets of reins? (1)
 - b. A Double has how many bits, and how many sets of reins? (2)
 - c. A bridle without a bit is called a Hackamore or Bitless Bridle.
- 4) The main difference in bridles is the type of Noseband:
 - a. Cavesson Noseband – this is the standard English noseband and pictured in these handouts.
 - b. Dropped Noseband – same as a Cavesson, but sits lower on the horses head, at the end of the nose, BELOW the bit. Used to keep horse from opening mouth to evade the bit.



Dropped noseband:
rests on end of nose
bone with chin-strap
below bit in chin groove.

- c. Flash Noseband - 2 pieces, a cavesson noseband adjusted high, with a bottom chin-strap BELOW the bit. Used to keep the horse's mouth closed and hold the bit in position.



Flash noseband:
cavesson noseband
adjusted high (just
below cheekbone)
and snugly; chin-strap
below bit in chin groove.

- d. Figure-Eight Noseband - 2 pieces in an X pattern, one piece higher, and one piece below the bit. Also used to keep the mouth closed, but sits higher on the nose to allow more expansion in his nostrils for fast work.





Figure 8 noseband:
upper jaw strap adjusted
snugly above bit, just in
front of cheekbone. Chin-
strap below bit in chin
groove.

Parts Purpose and Fit

General:

- All parts should be snug, not loose and sloppy. (if it was on your head would it hurt? Yes?, then it is too **TIGHT**. If it will slip right off the horse – it is too **LOOSE**)
- Need to be able to slip **ONE** finger under every part of the bridle.
- All straps should have keepers and runners fastened.
- There should be **TWO** holes above every buckle. (*do they know why?, in case of bridle breaks*)

Part	Purpose	Fit	
<u>Headpiece</u> <u>(Crownpiece)</u>	Hold the bridle onto the horse's head	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 finger fits under. • Needs to have 2 extra hole above the cheekpiece buckle • Fit without rubbing or pinching the ears 	
<u>Throatlatch</u>	Keep the bridle from slipping off over the horse's head	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fit fist or 4 fingers between this and the horse's neck • Loose enough so horse can flex his neck without binding the throat. 	
<u>Cheek piece</u>	Connects the headpiece to the bit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be sure to have 2 extra holes above the buckle. • Don't pull too tight – it will put too much pressure on the bit. 	
<u>Noseband</u>	It is often used to keep the animal's mouth closed, or to attach other pieces or equipment, such as martingales.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It should sit 1 or 2 fingers below the horse's cheekbones. • Snug, but allow for 1 or 2 fingers to slip underneath. 	
<u>Reins</u>	Connects the rider to the bit and the bridle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have keepers for all buckled ends 	
<u>Bit</u>	Primary source of control through the horse's mouth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It should not hang too low in the horse's mouth. • The Cheek piece should be tight enough to cause two small wrinkles in the lips. 	
<u>Brow band</u>	It prevents the bridle from sliding behind the poll onto the upper neck	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be long enough so the bridle doesn't rub and pinch the base of the ears. 	

What to know for USPC Ratings: D3 - Describe proper adjustment of snaffle bridle with cavesson noseband. Describe proper adjustment of curb chain if used on own mount.

AND All tack must be properly adjusted // **C1** - Identify tack on own mount and discuss fit.