

D-Level Tack Worksheet

Answer Key - taken directly from the USPC D Manual, pages 247 and following.

A. Names and Parts of Tack

1. Parts of a Saddle
2. Parts of a Bridle
3. Halter, Lead Rope and Lead Shank
 - a. Halters do not have a **bit**, so they can be used to tie a pony safely.
 - b. A lead rope can be made of cotton, hemp, or braided synthetic material. You should not use lead ropes made of slippery plastic or **nylon**.
 - c. Chain lead shanks are used for extra control. Never use it to **tie a pony**.
4. The Bit and How it Works
 - a. Bits are made of **metal, rubber, or nylon**.
 - b. Bits work by **pressure**, not pain.

B. Three Kinds of Bits

- i. Snaffle – works by **direct** pressure.
- ii. Kimberwicke – works by **leverage** (which multiplies the pressure).
- iii. Pelham – is a **double-action** bit. The top rein acts as a **snaffle** and the bottom rein acts as a curb bit.

C. Carrying and Handling Tack

1. Unless you're riding, your stirrups should be **run-up**.

D. Taking Care of Your Tack

1. Four Steps in Tack Care

- a. Clean
 - i. This keeps your leather from becoming **harsh** and **dry** and **rough** on your pony's skin and your hands.
 - ii. It prevents the leather from **drying out** and **cracking**.
- b. Condition
 - i. Replaces the lost **fat** in the leather.
 - ii. Apply **glycerin saddle soap** to seal the pores after oiling your tack.
- c. Place
 - i. Tack should be kept where it is **clean and dry**.
 - ii. It should not be dropped, scratched, knocked over, or **chewed** by animals.
 - iii. Saddle pads should be hung up to dry.
- d. Repair
 - i. Check for **damage** and wear every time you use or clean your tack.
 - ii. Your tack can become **dangerous** if you don't keep your tack in good repair.

2. How to Clean Tack

- a. Preparing
- b. Cleaning
 - i. Remove dirt and **jockeys**.
 - ii. Make sure the soap doesn't **lather**.
- c. Conditioning
 - i. Only if your leather is not **soft** and **supple**.
 - ii. Paint the conditioner on the **underside** of the leather.
 - iii. Don't get oil on **suede knee rolls** or on cloth. It stains!

- d. **Protecting** the Leather
 - i. Done **after** cleaning and any oiling.
 - ii. Glycerin saddle soap **seals** the pores of the leather.
- E. Tack Safety Check: Condition and Repair
 1. Parts to check include:
 - a. Saddle Tree
 - i. If it is **cracked** or **broken** it can hurt your pony's back.
 - ii. Check to see if the tree is broken by **pushing against the pommel and cantle** (it should not wrinkle the seat).
 - b. Leather
 - i. Should be strong, **supple**, free from cracks, and not **dried out**.
 - ii. Cracks with brown powder in them are called **dry rot**.
 - c. Stitching – should not be **broken** or missing.
 - d. Billets – should not be **stretched**, worn out or cracked.
 - e. Stirrup Leathers – must be strong, without **cracks** or too many **half-holes (extra holes)**.
 - f. Stirrup Bars – should always be in the **open** position, and not **rusty, loose, or bent**.
 - g. Girth
 - h. Keepers and Runners
 - i. Synthetic (Non-Leather) Tack
 - i. You must always use a leather “**breakaway**” crownpiece on your halter.
- F. Adjusting and Fitting Tack
 1. Saddle Fitting
 - a. How to Check the Fit of Saddle to Pony
 - i. There should be a clear channel over your pony's **withers**.
 - ii. **Three (3)** fingers should fit between saddle and withers.
 - iii. No pinching along shoulder blade.
 - b. Saddle Too Wide
 - i. Presses down on **withers**.
 - ii. Can be fixed by **re-stuffing panels** or (temporarily) using a **back protector pad**.
 - c. Saddle Too Narrow
 - i. Will dig into back **muscles** and pinch **shoulder blades**.
 - ii. The only solution is to use a **wider** saddle.
 - d. Balance of Saddle
 - i. The “**dip**” of a saddle should be in the **center**.
 - e. Girth Fitting
 - i. A girth should have **2** spare holes above the buckles and at least **1** spare hole below the buckles (when tightened).
 - ii. Types of Girths
 - f. Stirrup Leathers
 - i. They should have several spare holes.
 - ii. Don't punch too many “**half-holes**”, because it weakens the leather.
 - iii. Changing from side to side will help them **stretch** out evenly.
- G. Fitting Bits and Bridles
 1. Bits should be about ¼ inch wider than your pony's mouth.
 2. Snaffles
 - a. Should make one or two gentle **wrinkles** at the corners of his lips (like a **smile**).
 - b. Full-cheek snaffles should have **keepers** so the upper cheeks don't catch on something.
 3. Pelhams, Kimberwickes, and Curb Chains

- a. Should not make more than 1 small wrinkle(s).
 - b. Curb chain should lie flat (about two fingers width) so the bit can rotate 45 degrees.
4. Fitting Other Parts of the Bridle
- a. Browband – must be long enough so it doesn't **rub** or **pinch** the base of the ears.
 - b. Throatlash – must be able to fit a **fist** between it and pony's cheek.
 - c. Crownpiece – should have 2 extra holes above the cheek piece buckles.
 - d. Cavesson headstall – adjust the **height** of the **noseband**.
 - e. Cavesson noseband – should be 1 finger's width below cheekbones.
- H. How Other Items Should Fit
1. Saddle Pads
 - a. The British term is "**numnah**".
 - b. Should have a 2 -inch border around (unless it's a square pad).
 2. Breastplate (Hunt Style)
 - a. Keeps the saddle from **slipping back**.
 3. Breast Collar (Event or Polo Type)
 4. Standing Martingale
 - a. Never attach to a **drop** noseband.
 - b. Adjusted so it can be pushed up to **almost touch** a pony's throat when head is in normal position.
 - c. Only allowed for **D-level** Pony Club riders.
 5. Running Martingale
 - a. Adjusted with an **inch** of slack when pony's head is in a normal position.
 - b. They are **training aids** and not for beginners!
 6. Dropped Noseband
 7. Flash Noseband
 8. Figure 8 Noseband
- I. Selecting the Right Tack
1. Saddle
 - a. An **all - purpose** balanced seat saddle is best for PC riding.
 - b. Some saddles are not acceptable: **western, saddle seat show, Australian stock, racing, polo, old-fashioned "park"**.
 - c. Fitting Saddle to Rider
 - i. Rider can sit balanced, with **one hand** width of cantle behind him.
 2. Bridles and Other Tack
 - a. Comes in several sizes: **pony, cob, horse (full)**.
 - b. Caution! Bridles for ponies should not have **horse-size** reins.
 - c. Bits
 - i. Must not be **rusty**, rough or worn thin.
 - ii. Avoid **nickel** bits – they bend and develop thin spots and **sharp edges**.
 - d. Fittings
 - i. Stirrup irons should be **1 inch** wider than the rider's foot.
 - ii. **Peacock** stirrup irons are the safest for small children (and clubbers).
- J. Learning More About Tack
1. See how quickly you put together a bridle.
 2. Invite local saddler to come and talk to your Pony Club.
 3. Make a "wish list" of tack you'd like to own.
 4. Play tack parts tag with other clubbers.
 5. Have a tack cleaning party.