

A Tracing is required to determine the correct width of the tree..

There are a number of ways you can do this:

1. ZALDI BACK GAUGE
2. WIRE TRACING OR ARCHITECTURAL RULER



The gauge is placed **over the horse's** back, on the withers, 5cm (approximately 3 fingers width) behind the back edge of **the horse's scapula** – see diagram below.

Gently adjust the gauge opening until both legs rest lightly on the horse.

You can then read off the measurement for the width of tree required for your horse. This should fall within the range of 28cm to 36cm.

Place the "ZALDI Horse Back Gauge" on the withers, 5cm (+/- 3 finger's width) behind the back edge of the scapula. You should obtain a measurement of 28cm to 36cm. This is the measurement of the width of your saddle tree.

**Width of your saddle tree**



32 centimeters

**Width of your saddle tree**

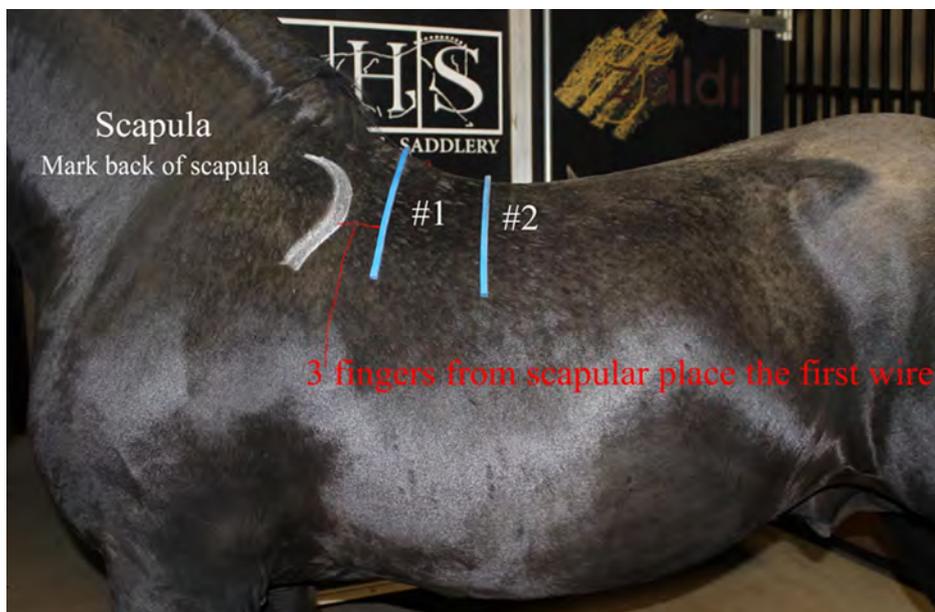



Place the gauge 5cm behind the scapula. If you are unsure, the diagram should help you locate this.

## WIRE TRACING INSTRUCTIONS (MOST ACCURATE)

Any wire measuring 22" in length, that is pliable enough to shape but rigid enough to hold its shape will work. A coat hanger wire will work, being careful press hard enough so the wire maintains the new shape. I prefer the Architectural ruler for this job.

Take two pieces of letter size paper and tape together. This will make it easy to scan later.



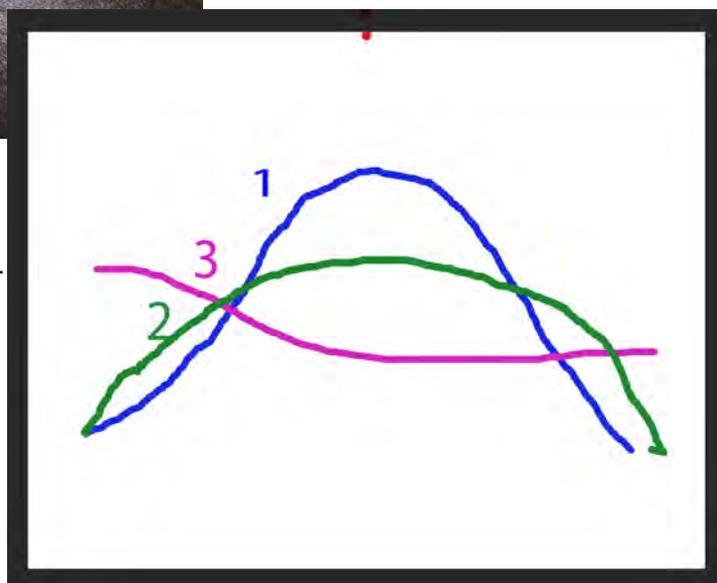
**Tracing position 1** (3 fingers behind Scapula) Locate the scapula, I mark it with chalk. Bend the ruler/wire in half & then place the wire 3 fingers width behind the scapula over the wither. Take the wire/ruler and place it on a large piece of paper, transfer the inside of the wire/ruler shape onto the paper.

**Tracing Position 2** (Lowest point of back) To determine the lowest part of the back if it is not obvious to the eye, place a pencil at the wither and let it roll down the back. It will settle on the lowest point of the back. Place the ruler here. Bend it to shape and transfer to the paper.



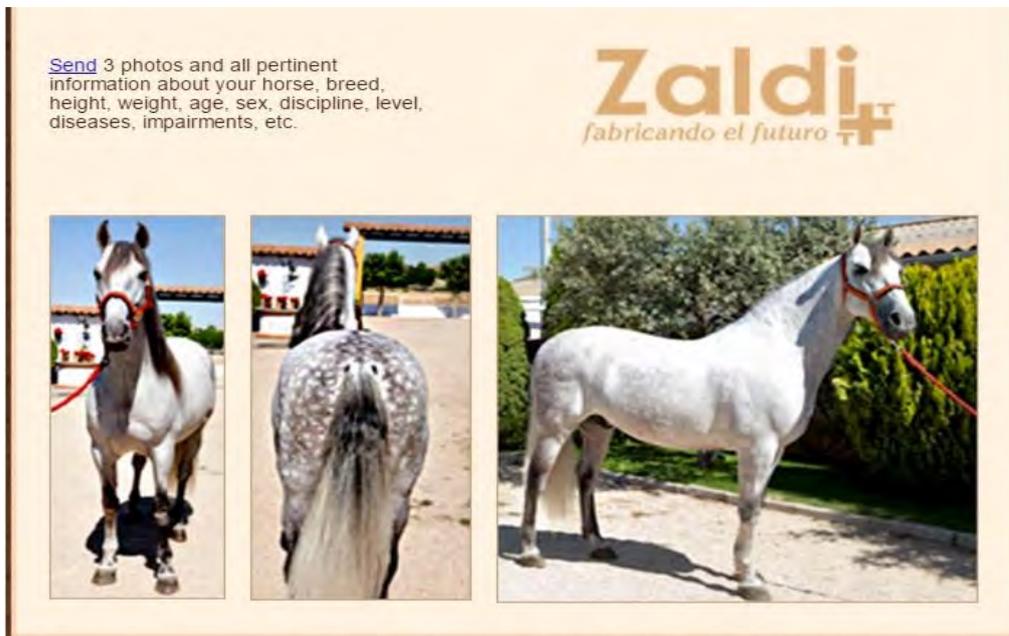
**Tracing Position 3** ( the top line) Open the ruler to flat, then lay along the top line of your horse. Trace to the paper.

Trace the wire to the two pieces of letter size paper that you have taped together and trace your wire. Repeat this for all 3 tracing positions. No need to make multiple pages, just place each tracing over top the other as seen in the example tracing.



## SENDING YOUR TRACING

Separate the two pieces of paper, scan and email the tracing to [darkhorsesaddlery@gmail.com](mailto:darkhorsesaddlery@gmail.com) and photo of your horse from the side front and the topline by standing behind on an elevated position. It is helpful to take photos with the ruler/wire while making your tracing. This will record the accuracy of the wire position when translating the scan of your tracing.



If you are concerned or have an unusual shaped or size horse then you could send 3 photos and all pertinent information about your horse, breed, height, weight, age, sex, discipline, any impairments, etc.



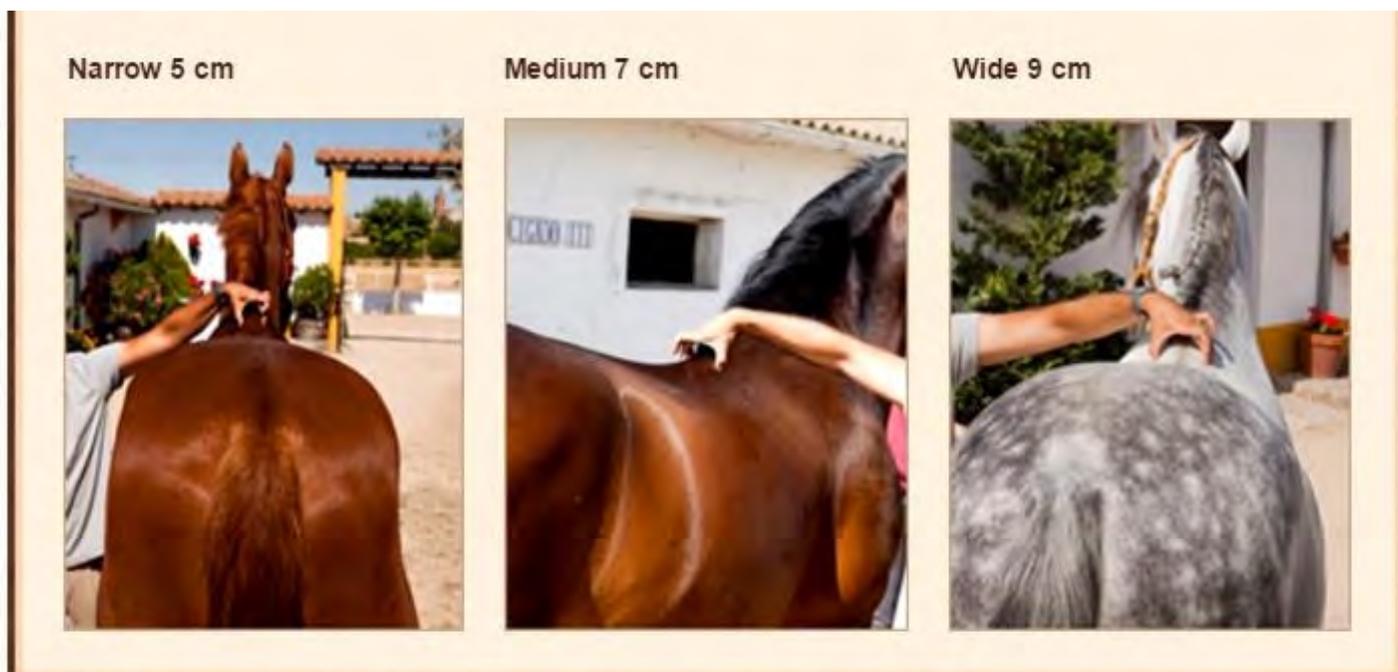
### Tree Sizes

- 28cm (aprox. 11.02") very Narrow
- 29cm (aprox. 11.05") Narrow
- 30cm (aprox. 11.08") Medium Narrow
- 31cm (aprox. 12") Medium Small
- 32cm (aprox. 12.05") Medium ( most common)
- 33cm (aprox. 13.") Medium wide
- 34cm (aprox. 13.04") Wide
- 35cm (aprox. 13.08") X Wide
- 36cm (aprox. 14") XXWide

## CHANNEL WIDE

The saddle should vertically clear the horse's wither when the rider is sitting on the saddle. As a rough guide there should be a minimum of about 3.5cm (about 1.5" or 2 fingers' width) clearance. The saddle must also clear the horse's spine and sit with an equal bearing surface at the front and rear.

Zaldi handcrafts (2.75") wide to clear the horse's spine. They offer the option of the saddle narrow width of 5cm (2"), a wide width of 9cm (3.5") or the addition of the 11cm for the horses with very wide withers and heavier bone. The panels should sit on either side of the spine on the longissimus muscle. The panels should not touch the spine or be two wide that they are laying on the outside of the longissimus muscle.



Place fingers on either side of the spinal column at the base of the withers, where the first vertebra begins. Measuring the width with your index and thumb. This measurement is the width required between the panels, the Channel width.

The saddle can easily be adjusted using the "Zaldi Open-Close Machine".

Remember that at first the saddle will not be perfectly adjusted. After tightening the girth, the saddle will need a TIME OF ADJUSTMENT of 5 to 10 hours of riding, depending on the saddle model, the horse and the rider.



Note reference Zaldi saddles: If you order the wrong size, your horse changes or you need to fit to a different horses then the current generation of Zaldi saddles are 'factory' adjustable within the range above and can be returned to us for adjustment (we offer a free adjustment service, you just pay shipping)

## CHOOSING THE CORRECT SEAT SIZE

The seat size is not necessarily dependant on the size of your backside! When sitting, measure the length from the base of the spine (tail bone or coccyx) to the knee. This is the important measurement you need to choose your saddle size. See the chart above. The column on the right shows the saddle seat sizes.

Send all pertinent information about the rider: age, height, weight, sex, discipline, level, impairments, preferences, etc. When sitting, measure the length from the base of the spine (tail bone or coccyx) to the knee. This is the measurement you need to chose your saddle size.



Guide for choosing the saddle size

UPPER LEG LENGTH CENTIMETERS	SADDLE SIZE INCHES
Up to 41 cm	15"
from 42 to 46 cm	16"
from 47 to 50 cm	16,5"
from 51 to 54 cm	17"
from 55 to 58 cm	17,5"
from 59 to 61 cm	18"
Greater than 62 cm	19"



Deep seats in the dressage saddle will require a longer size then the same rider in a flatter seat of a jump saddle, usually moving up 1/2 to 1 size.

Ex. 17" jump semi flat seat would compare to a 18" professional deep dressage saddle.

In case of the very deep Kira Klass, half size increase do to the deepness of the seat

## SIDESADDLES

Saddle or tree width is measured from the front of the seat to the cantle, much like a western saddle. The photo shows the comparison between the sidesaddle measure (red) and the english saddle measurement (yellow).



## CARE AND WARRANTY

It is important to remember that by just placing a saddle on a horse's back without tightening the girth, you can not determine if there is a perfect fit.

A bottle of leather conditioner and instructions to oil your saddle upon arrival accompanies your saddle. Oiling everything that is leather: this extends the life of your saddle and aids in shortening the break in period. Remember leather is skin, dry skin cracks and is not supple. Keep your stirrup leathers conditioned. When dry they will act like sandpaper and rub the finish on your flaps. Caring for the leather on your saddle will give you a lifetime of riding.

All Zaldi saddles come with a 10 year limited warranty on the tree.

## ZALDI SADDLE FACTS

**Materials:** Saddles are now available in a variety of materials as well as traditional leather. Latest synthetic materials, such as the ranges available in Z-plus, are very easy to clean, just with soap and water, and virtually stain-proof as well as being strong, hard wearing and available in a wide range of colours.

**Trees:** A 'new generation' of high-tech trees are now being produced by Zaldi to a very high specification. Made from special thermoplastic materials (and some also incorporate carbon-fibre) developed in conjunction with FIDAUT (Foundation for the Investigation and Development in Transport and Energy) these trees possess the necessary rigidity with a great capacity to deform and absorb energy in specified areas. They are also light in weight.

The saddle tree may be considered the 'heart' of the saddle and must have some elasticity to help disperse the rider's weight over the horse's back, but the tree must not be 100% elastic because friction points can be created which could also cut off the horse's circulation in the middle of the spinal column.

Zaldi's latest saddle trees are specifically designed and differently shaped to suit each individual application. They include; deep dressage, very deep dressage, semi-flat jump, intermediate all-purpose, light flexible endurance/raid, comfortable 'mountain', resistant 'country'.

There is now even a new Zaldi lightweight design for the traditional Spanish Vaquera saddle incorporating state of the art carbon fibre, or carbon-fibre/polypropylene mix trees.

Traditional style Vaquera saddles are now available with the new Zaldi tree and being more flexible and significantly lighter in weight are kinder to the horse's back. Panels are now available filled with either natural animal hair or latex rubber. Older traditional saddles tended to be very rigid, relatively heavy, made in one 'standard' size and were filled with rush or straw fibres and the saddle would basically 'mould' itself to some extent to the horse's shape with the disadvantage that the saddle became less transferable from horse to horse.

Note the traditional 'bucket' stirrups used on Vaquera saddles are effectively 'safety' stirrups, as it is unlikely you can slip your foot through them (so long as you have correctly sized stirrups, i.e. not a child riding in adult/full size stirrups) and be dragged in a fall. Even these have been modernized now and are available much lighter in weight, using alloy or plastic materials.