



## How to order the correct size saddle

### To determine the required saddle width

There are a number of ways you can do this:

1. Using the Zaldi saddle gauge.
2. Use a piece of wire.
3. Use the Zaldi back former.

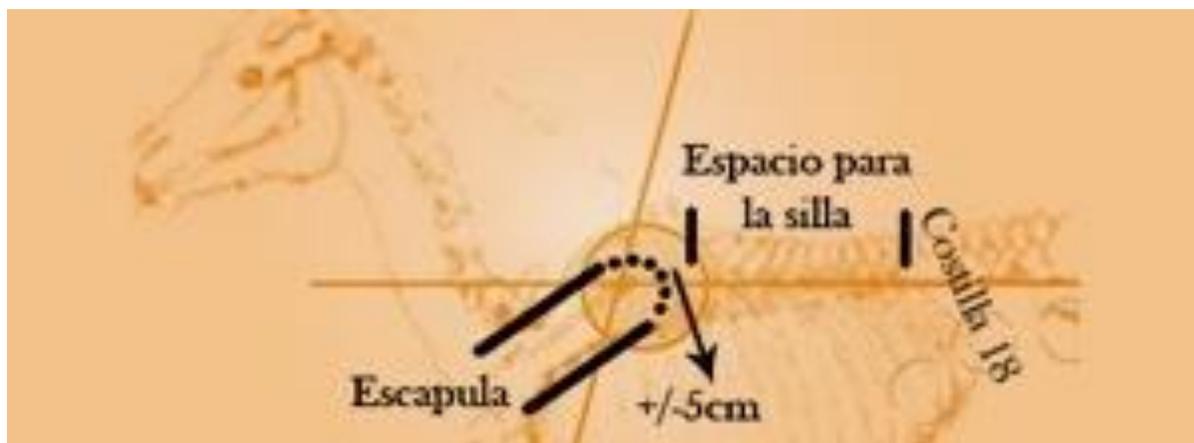
### The Zaldi saddle gauge



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



The gauge is placed on the horse's back as shown here and on the previous page (5cm behind the scapula)

You are measuring the width required for the saddle tree.

Zaldi saddle trees are factory/dealer adjustable, using the Zaldi adjusting machine.

Throughout the life of the latest generation Zaldi saddles they can be adjusted from 28cm to 36cm widths as required.



#### Typical sizes

- 28cm (approx 11.02") Very narrow
- 30cm (approx 11.8") Narrow.  
(Some UK manufacturers denote this by N, or sometimes by the number 2)
- 32cm (approx 12.6") Normal.  
(Some UK manufacturers denote this by M, or sometimes by the number 3)
- 33cm (approx 13") Medium/wide  
(Some UK manufacturers denote this by W, or by the number 4)

34cm (approx 13.4") Wide.

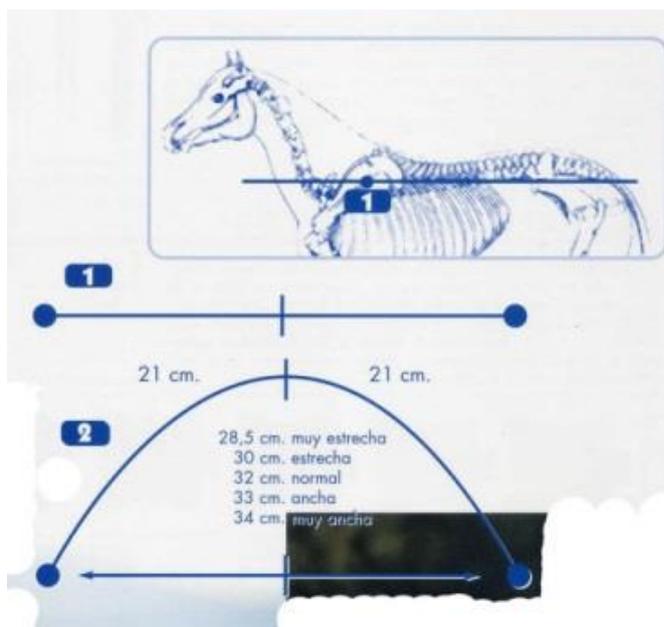
(Some UK manufacturers denote this by XW, or sometimes by the number 5)

36cm (approx. 14.17") Very wide.

### Gauging the width using a piece of wire

This is a simple method to determine what width of saddle best fits your horse using a 42cm (approx. 16.5") length of stiff wire.

1. Take a piece of wire (perhaps an old coat hanger?) and cut it to a length of 42cm (about 16.5") . . . see '1' below.
2. Bend the wire roughly as shown in the diagram '2' below, then bend the wire over your horse's back just behind the wither and at the point where the front of the saddle will sit (where the saddle 'nail' is located - see diagram 'SEAT - saddle SIZE' below).



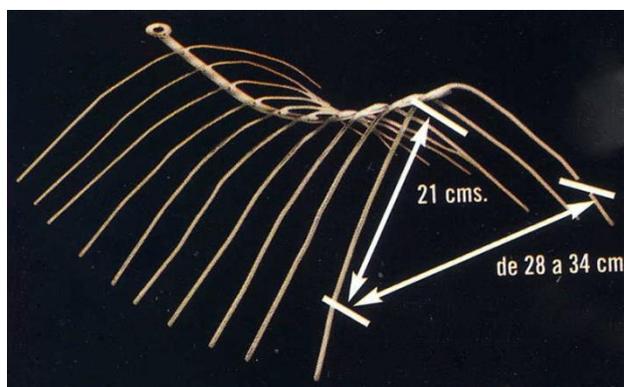
3. Press the wire firmly into shape (so that it does not spring open when you remove it from your horse's back).
4. Then measure the distance apart of the two ends of the wire, as shown in the diagram.

This measurement can be used as the WIDTH guide for most makes of saddle.

Note reference Zaldi saddles: If you order the wrong size, your horses 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 carriage).



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.



If you are really concerned you may have a horse with an unusual back and you would like us to send an exact back shape to Zaldi for you then you could order a [Zaldi back gauge](#).

Zaldi sizing gauge: As a service to our customers we only charge 5 euros plus postage to anywhere in the world and we even refund this if you buy a saddle from us.

## Choosing the saddle 'seat' size

También debemos conocer los datos del jinete para elegir la silla más adecuada. Edad, altura, peso, disciplina deportiva, nivel, capacidades y preferencias. Siéntate y mide la distancia desde la base de la espalda hasta la rodilla, así consigues una medida para elegir tu silla.



### Cuadro con datos orientativos

MEDIDA PIERNA (Centímetros)	TALLA DE LA SILLA (Pulgadas)
Hasta 41 cm	15"
De 42 a 46 cm	16"
De 47 a 50 cm	16,5"
De 51 a 54 cm	17"
De 55 a 58 cm	17,5"
De 59 a 61 cm	18"
A partir de 62 cm	19"

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 (above) shows the saddle seat size.

Recuerda que es una guía de ayuda, pero la medida de asiento puede variar dependiendo de tus preferencias.

Medida del asiento en pulgadas



Asiento equilibrado

The white arrow on the picture (left) shows the approximate saddle seat size measurement.

Due to the popular very deep seats on some dressage saddles some riders may feel more comfortable with a slightly generous size – note the measurement is to the top of the cantle.

## SIDE SADDLES

Saddle or tree width is measured as with ordinary saddles as described above. However the saddle seat size, or length, is measured differently, as shown in the diagram (right).



## Gullet width

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 make most of their saddles with a central 'canal' approximately 7cm (2.75") wide to clear the horse's spine. However they can make the saddle in a narrow width of 5cm (2") or a wide width of 9cm (3.5") if required. If you feel you need one of these options please specify this on your order and Zaldi will make the saddle to suit.



Place fingers on either side of the spinal column at the base of the withers, where the first vertebra begins, and pinch gently. This is the approximate measurement of the gullet between the panels of your saddle

## More saddle fitting information

### IMPORTANT NOTE:

The greatest mistake often made when checking the fit of a new saddle is to place it on a horse, even without tightening the girth, and to assume there will be a perfect fit straight away.

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.

Consider the length of your horse's back because this also affects the optimum size of saddle for your horse. If the saddle is too long the rear of the saddle may put pressure on the horse's loins, which not only causes discomfort but can inhibit movement and

even cause damage to the horse's back. Care should be taken with some Spanish horses as this breed tends to be shorter in the back than many others (not a 'fault', probably an advantage if your pursuit is Alta Escuela and other collected disciplines). In our webshop we have indicated the length of the saddle over the horse's back for many of the saddles.

## Some general information

**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 CIDAUT (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 modernised now and are available much lighter in weight, using alloy or plastic materials.

[Viva Iberica Webshop](http://webshop.viva-iberica.com)

[Yequada Iberica Site](http://www.yequada.com)