



Table of Contents.

Table of Contents.....	1
• Do you have a list of agents and tack stores where I can buy a BALANCE saddle?.....	2
• How much are the BALANCE saddles?.....	3
• Can I use the same saddle on more than one horse?.....	4
<i>In terms of width.</i>	4
<i>In terms of length.</i>	4
• There are several different ways to try the BALANCE Saddling System:.....	4
<i>With a friend or trainer</i>	5
<i>With a BALANCE Test Ride Facilitator.</i>	5
<i>With a BALANCE registered Saddle Consultant.</i>	5
<i>With a one-to-one, or group Consultation with one of the BALANCE co-founders Carol Brett and/or Lesley Taylor.....</i>	5
<i>With a one-to-one or group Consultation with one of the BALANCE registered Saddle Consultants. (BrSC)</i>	5
<i>With a BALANCE registered Test Ride Facilitator (BrTRF)</i>	5
<i>If none of the methods explained above are available to you.....</i>	6
• Can I try a saddle before I buy it?	7
• Do I have to be an experienced rider to ride in one?	8
• What aftercare does BALANCE provide?	9
• Can I use the BALANCE pads with other saddles?.....	11
• What is different about the BALANCE Saddling System?.....	13
• What breeds of horses are the BALANCE saddles suitable for?	14
• What riding activity are BALANCE saddles suitable for?.....	15
• I'm interested in becoming a BALANCE agent, so how do I get involved	16

Do you have a list of agents and tack stores where I can buy a BALANCE saddle?

We do not trade with tack stores, so you will not find new BALANCE saddles in any tack store.

This is because we have always wanted our saddles to be sold by, or via, people who have a genuine knowledge and practical experience with the BALANCE approach. These people have also demonstrated that they are willing to put the welfare of the horse before profit and are therefore, sympathetic to the BALANCE philosophy.

New BALANCE saddles are only available from Equi-Librium Ltd based in the UK. The exception to this is the BALANCE Pony Saddles which can also be purchased from the BALANCE Test Ride Facilitators.

Other BALANCE products (Pads, Eeezy Reins etc) are available from Equi-Librium Ltd in the UK and from a small number of BALANCE registered Stockists.

For a list of current TRFs and BALANCE Stockists, please go to the BALANCE website.

http://www.balanceinternational.com/saddles_consultants.asp




How much are the BALANCE saddles?

New BALANCE saddles.

The Price Lists for new BALANCE saddles can be found in the Download Centre of our website.

<http://www.balanceinternational.com/downloads.asp>

Please make sure that you identify the correct Price List for your country. The categories are as follows:

-  UK and EU for any country that is in the European Union
-  USA and Canada
-  Rest Of the World for any other country.

Pre-Owned BALANCE Saddles.

Although BALANCE does not buy and sell used saddles, it is sometimes possible to find pre-owned BALANCE saddles through our Used Saddle page, from other private sales and sometimes in tack stores.

The prices for these will obviously depend on their age and condition and be set by the seller. However, because they are so well made with high quality materials, they hold their value very well and provide good service for many years if looked after well. We cannot advise on the amount that a used BALANCE is worth.

If you want to try to find a pre-owned saddle, we strongly recommend that you have a 'Hands On' Consultation with a BrSC where possible; book a Test Ride Session with a BALANCE TRF; or if these methods are not available to you..... let us help you through our Distant Consultation Service.

Whichever method you use, it will help you to determine which BALANCE saddle is appropriate for you and your horse/s. Contact details for **BrSCs** and **TRFs** are on the website and information about our Distant Consultation Service, including the charges, can also be found on the Download Centre under **Admin documents** [DISTANT CONSULTATION Information](#)



Can I use the same saddle on more than one horse?

Yes, in many cases, the same saddle will work on a large variety of horses of different breeds and types. The BALANCE layered pad system allows for one saddle to be used

The limiting factors In terms of tree width.

When the saddle is placed on the horses back with **no pads** underneath, it should be slightly wider than the widest horse it is intended for, but not so wide that it sits on the withers of the narrowest horse it will be used on.

The limiting factors In terms of tree length.

The tree/panels should not extend beyond the line of the last rib on the shortest backed horse.

The limiting factors in terms of specific and individual equine needs.

In theory, it would be great to think that you could buy any very wide saddle that you could find and stack a load of pads underneath on any horse and that it would work.

However, the degree of success you will have, if you over-simplify the concept will be mixed at best and could lead to some horses being worse off!

For example, let's take an older Quarter Horse who has spent his whole life in tight and restrictive Western Saddles and has therefore, developed coping strategies and compensatory movement patterns to manage the discomfort and disablement. Without doubt, this horse needs and deserves to have a more comfortable saddle, but he is likely to need a gradual introduction to a wider/better saddle in combination with sympathetic and un-demanding riding for a while, to get the benefits you are trying to offer. To suddenly put him into a saddle that allows him to move as nature intended while still expecting him to perform as usual, could pull the proverbial rug out from under his feet and leave him confused and un-coordinated.

If you have more than one horse, you may find that their saddling needs differ too much to use one saddle on both of them, even if they are a similar shape. However, this is something that we address and discuss, when we go through the hands on or distant Consultation process.

🕒 **There are several different ways to try the BALANCE Saddling System:**

With a friend or trainer that uses the BALANCE Saddling System and who will let you ride in their saddle.

With a BALANCE Test Ride Facilitator.

The **TRF's** have all used the BALANCE saddles for a long time and are familiar with the different ways to pad the saddle correctly for you to ride in it. They have a small selection of BALANCE saddles for you to experience the type of saddle that you and your horse finds most comfortable.

With a BALANCE registered Saddle Consultant.

The **BrSC's** have gone through a lengthy training with the BALANCE co-founders, Lesley Taylor and Carol Brett. They will have access to a larger range of BALANCE saddles. They are also available to give lectures and demonstrations.

With a one-to-one, or group Consultation with one of the BALANCE co-founders Carol Brett and/or Lesley Taylor.

Carol Brett will see horses in the UK and the EU, when she has time and makes several trips each year to various states in the USA to present Seminars, Clinics and Workshops on Saddling and Riding. If you are fortunate enough to be able to get yourself and your horse to a Saddling Clinic with Carol it is well worth doing. ***Please note...*** because of the demands on their time, Lesley and Carol tend to see horses who have complex issues, e.g. Veterinary referrals; lameness that defies diagnosis; unresolved behavioural or training issues, etc.

With a one-to-one or group Consultation with one of the BALANCE registered Saddle Consultants. (BrSC)

These are individuals who have had many years of experience of working with the BALANCE Saddling System and also have a proven track record of being able to provide excellent after-care to their clients and are able to provide extended support as necessary. They are listed on the website.

With a BALANCE registered Test Ride Facilitator (BrTRF).

These are individuals who have a sound practical knowledge and experience of using BALANCE products because they are all BALANCE clients. This means that they can empathise with those of you who are finding your way towards committing to 'horse friendly' saddling and need help to identify what this means, what it looks like, what it feels like etc. You can book some time with them to bring a selection

of BALANCE saddles and pads to an agreed venue and they will help you to try them and share their experience with you. If you decide that you want to buy a BALANCE saddle as a result of your session, they can also help you to compile the information required by Equilibrium Ltd. to accept an order from you.

If none of the methods explained above are available to you...

The staff at the BALANCE office can help you via our highly successful Distant Consultation Service. If you want to go this route, we will need a good range of data from you relating to you, your horse, your riding style and experience etc. The information that we need from you is available as a pdf file on the Download Centre on our website under ***Admin documents/[DISTANT CONSULTATION Information](#)***

Once we have this information we can tell you the most suitable saddle for you and your horse regarding the Model; Style; Width and Length, so that you know what you will be looking for.

If you know someone who has a BALANCE saddle and will allow you to ride in it on your own horse and you decided that you and your horse love the saddle and want to buy something identical or similar, please get in touch because we can use either a full Distant Consultation or short-cut version to help you to buy the right saddle. Contact the office for details.

Can I try a saddle before I buy it?

If you have access to a method of seeing and trying a BALANCE saddle with a BALANCE registered Saddle Consultant or BALANCE registered Test Ride Facilitator, you will not usually have access to a Sample/Hire period because you will have had the opportunity to ride in the saddles already.

However, in situations where a BrSC or BrTRF has seen you and feels that the situation merits some form of hire period (*e.g. a horse that has had a long standing lameness/health issue that may be helped or resolved with a better saddle, but there is no knowing how much until a saddle can be used for a while*) we do have an arrangement where clients living in EU countries can pay for the use of a saddle for an agreed period of time. The costs and admin. arrangements can be discussed with the BALANCE office when applicable.

In the USA, we have a long established Sampling Service for people who work with us via the Long Distance Consultation process. This means that they can usually have an appropriate saddle to use during a 30 day Sampling Period before the sale becomes definite. The costs and admin. arrangements can be discussed with the BALANCE office when applicable. We have an arrangement whereby any saddles NOT kept at the end of the Sampling arrangement can be returned for storage in the USA rather than being returned to the UK.

Unfortunately, we do not have such an arrangement in other countries and therefore, we cannot offer the Sampling/Hire service outside of the EU or USA because of the complications that arise with the recovery of Import Duties and Sales Taxes.

This has never stood in the way of people in what we refer to as Rest Of World countries from buying BALANCE saddles. Our experience in combination with the comprehensive list of information and data we require for the Distant Consultation means that we are able to direct riders to the most appropriate BALANCE saddle, even without the benefit of a Sampling period.

Do I have to be an experienced rider to ride in one?

No. you don't have to be an experienced rider to ride in one. In fact, there are some riding schools that use BALANCE saddles, so beginner riders (children and adults) learn to ride in them. However, you do need to be a reasonably balanced rider and be willing to take responsibility for your own co-ordination and movement.

When saddling in a 'Constructive' way, that avoids the suppression of good movement and provides a good level of comfort for the horse, the rider cannot expect the saddle to behave in the same way as a saddle that is tightly fitted into the soft tissues of the horse's back.






This is where the rider has to make a choice.....to commit to developing a level of skill and balance that allows the use of a horse-friendly saddle, or to set aside the needs of the horse in order to rely on the saddle to cover up their lack of balance, co-ordination and sympathetic riding.

When 'experience' actually *creates* a problem.


Someone can be described as an 'experienced rider' without being a 'good rider'. Some experienced riders find the whole process of re-learning a different approach to saddling, riding etc, even when in their long term interests,.....too hard to handle and would rather stick with what they are familiar with, even if that is detrimental to their horse. We can probably all think of people like this!

We are always impressed by established riders and trainers who come to us with an open mind and are willing to put the welfare of their horse ahead of their own ego in order to learn.

What aftercare does BALANCE provide?

-  Most people only commit to buying a BALANCE saddle after some considerable thought and research, so have a good idea of what it is all about and how it works well before they get a saddle.
-  The saddles come with a 47 page User's Manual which contains a huge amount of information, with many full colour pictures.
-  The co-founders and designers of the BALANCE saddles and the BALANCE Saddling System will personally answer questions by email or phone (if necessary).
-  One of the BALANCE registered Saddle Consultants may be available to visit and answer your query.
-  Many saddle fitters/sellers rely on paid-for after-care to provide continued income and therefore have a vested interest in encouraging their customers to see them as an expert who must be consulted on a regular basis and discouraging the customer from working things out for themselves.

By contrast, BALANCE has always encouraged horse owners to become as self-reliant as possible in terms of assessing and checking the continued suitability of their saddle. In practice this means getting into the habit of paying attention to the way the saddle sits on the horse in case things change; observing how the horse looks in terms of his posture, his muscle development etc. and being aware of changes in movement, performance and attitude.

-  In day to day work, a BALANCE saddle and pads are often the most consistent and reliable aspect of a ridden horses life and therefore, unlikely in themselves to cause changes in shape, movement etc. beyond the initial improvement seen when a horse is changed from a conventionally fitted saddle to a BALANCE saddle. If it looks as if anything more than a minor adjustment of pads for the fine tuning of comfort is needed, the BALANCE saddle owner learns to adopt a more Holistic way of assessing what is going on.

For example: Changes in the horses life, such as hoof balance, a new training/riding technique, change of food, loss of a companion,

change of pasture, the need for dental attention, change in weather conditions, physical injury, infectious/viral/fungal disease etc. All of these can impact on health, soundness, movement, muscle development and blood flow and in turn can change the shape/posture of the horse to the extent that the saddle sits on him in an unusual/different way.

This makes the way the BALANCE Saddling System works on the horse rather like an early warning system of problems that need to be addressed.

■ There is a comprehensive Trouble-shooting section in the BALANCE Saddle Owners Manual and we are always available to help people who have purchased their BALANCE Saddle from us, via email, phone calls and face to face support, when possible, for as long as the owner needs.

Can I use the BALANCE pads with other saddles?

Yes, the BALANCE Pad System can improve the 'fit' and comfort of other makes of saddle. If you own a tree-less saddle or an adjustable width saddle, you might like to know that our experience shows that the components found in the BALANCE Pad System could increase the comfort and the versatility of fit of your saddle. For example:

Tree-less saddles.

The BALANCE Pro-Complete Base Pads create a shallow channel down the spine which helps to avoid heavy pressures in this area associated with some treeless saddles. Particularly important when you are helping your horse to recover weak and atrophied muscle either side of the spinous processes. The Pro-Complete add-on pads can also help to create a more supportive shape in the top of the saddle for the rider and will soften the firm front edge of the saddle by gently lifting it away from the back of the shoulders. There is also extra built in protection in the area of most pressure around the stirrup bar and girth attachments.

Adjustable width Saddles.

These can work very well when taking a horse through a remedial programme of recovery and the synthetic versions are often chosen to fit in with a budget. However, to get the best from this kind of saddle, you need to work with a pad system that supports this adjustment and the changes the horse makes. The BALANCE Pad System was designed specifically to do this job and can turn an inexpensive synthetic saddle into something that is a big improvement on many conventional, expensive leather saddles that you see!

BALANCE pads come in a range of shapes and materials to provide the rider with a whole selection of ways in which to improve and support the way their saddle works, to keep in line with the changing needs of their horse.

 **All makes of saddle!**

If your saddle has been fitted with consideration for your horse's comfort to allow room for a well made, protective saddle pad, you could make use of any of the BALANCE Wool fleece saddle pads. The excellent properties of natural wool fleece are well known. Choose between natural wool fleece woven into a backing or lambskin.

Both have their advantages and both kinds of wool fleece are incorporated into saddle pads that are well shaped, machine washable and designed with the horse's comfort as the priority.

One thing you need to be aware of if you want BALANCE pads for use under a non-BALANCE saddle, is that our pads are deliberately made to be a generous size to avoid the chance of an edge sliding under the panels of the saddle. BALANCE saddles are also more generous in their panel width than many other makes of saddle. These things combined mean that our pads may look bigger under your saddle than you are used to.

We would rather use and supply equipment that is functional and safe/comfortable for the horse and rider, than be overly focussed on the way it looks, but if it is important to you that your pads fit very neatly under your saddle and do not show much material beyond the outline of your saddle, the BALANCE pads may not look the way you would like, even if they work well for your horse.

Take a look at the BALANCE range today by downloading an **Additional Products Catalogue/ Price List and Order Form** from the Download Centre on the website and consider how these products could increase the comfort and benefits of your current saddle.

What is different about the BALANCE Saddling System?

BALANCE led the way back in the early 1990s in bringing to the notice of the horse industry and individual horse owners, two important issues regarding the choice of a saddle. One is Saddle Design and Construction and the other is the way saddles are fitted to the horse.

See the '**About Us**' and '**How and Why this System Evolved**' pages on the Website.

The BALANCE approach to Saddling is known as The BALANCE Saddling System and also as 'Constructive Saddling'.

The design features found on the horse's side of all BALANCE saddles support the way he needs/wants to use his body when at its most efficient and comfortable.

The 'fitting' approach takes this to the next level by paying attention to the dynamic posture of the horse and his bio-mechanics. The saddle and pads combine to create a stable, but un-restrictive interface between the horse and the rider. One that allows and encourages healthy movement, healthy blood flow and healthy posture.

This same approach can be used to help damaged, muscle wasted (from previous saddles) horses to recover their health, soundness and performance as well as to maintain these qualities in horses who have never had the disadvantage of a conventionally designed and fitted saddle.










Over the many years of working in this way, the BALANCE co-founders have witnessed countless numbers of horses released from the discomfort, confusion and restriction of their expertly fitted, expensive, bespoke saddles and realising, sometimes for the first time in their lives, that being ridden does not have to be a painful struggle.

 **What breeds of horses are the BALANCE saddles suitable for?**

- Arabs
- Cobs
- Draft and draft crosses
- Friesians
- Gaited horses
- Iberian breeds
- Icelandic horses
- Lippizanners
- Morgans
- Paints
- Ponies
- Quarter Horses
- Saddlebreds
- Standardbreds
- Thoroughbreds
- Trotters
- Warmbloods

In fact, if we have missed the breed of your horse off our list, it is because we forgot to include it, not that the BALANCE saddles are not suitable.

What riding activity are **BALANCE** saddles suitable for?

-  Any activity of English riding, including:
-  Dressage
-  Eventing
-  Endurance
-  Hacking/|Trail riding
-  Hunting
-  Polo
-  Racing
-  Show Jumping

In fact, if we have missed the activity that you do with your horse off our list, it is because we forgot to include it, not that the **BALANCE** saddles are not suitable.

However, there is something you need to be aware of. In every kind of riding activity listed, the **BALANCE** saddles will only provide the best results when used in a way that supports the horse moving in an efficient state of weight carrying balance.

I'm interested in becoming a BALANCE agent, so how do I get involved

There is a need to grow the network of people around the world who can help others to find their way to the BALANCE approach. It may be that this appeals to you.

If you feel that you have skills, enthusiasm and knowledge that could contribute to our 'family', do get in touch. However, please keep in mind that we feel that it is essential for those who want to lead the way, to do so by example.

When we want to increase the number of Test Ride Facilitators, for example, we choose them from our long standing clients because we know that *they* have an understanding of how we work and what we are trying to achieve from the point of view of being a customer and they also have a practical experience of working with the BALANCE products over an extended period of time.

This is one of the reasons that we have not gone down the road of making BALANCE saddles available through tack stores. We feel that if someone really understands the BALANCE Saddling System, they cannot fit saddles in a conventional way at the same time.

There are some saddle fitters and stockists who offer a valuable service for horse owners who are trying to move towards the BALANCE approach but for some reason, find it too big a leap to let go of more conventional methods and need to take smaller steps towards a BALANCE saddle. Where appropriate, we are happy to provide information about these individuals and if you feel that this is a service you are interested in providing to your own customers, do let us know.

🕒 **Are there horses that the BALANCE Saddles do not work for?**

In all of the years we have been doing this work, we have not come across a horse that this approach wasn't right for.

However, one cannot take the horse in isolation. It is necessary to look at the situation in a more Holistic way and take on board the expectations, attitude and ability of the rider to assess if the shift to the BALANCE approach is likely to work long-term.

For example:

Riders and Trainers who are fixed in their minds and bodies.

The rider who has lessons with a 'Dressage Trainer' who is convinced that the 'correct' way to sit when doing Dressage is with a long, almost straight leg position.

Such a rider is not likely to get much support from their trainer if they move into a BALANCE saddle that is almost always considerably wider than the medium fit saddle they have been used to. BALANCE saddles require the rider to ride with a stirrup length and leg position that is bio-mechanically effective, rather than one that conforms to some fixed image and this often means riding with a slightly shorter stirrup length to allow more angle and mobility in the hip and knee joints.

It is depressing to hear from BALANCE saddle owners who have felt and seen the amazing transformations in their horses when they moved away from narrow saddles, only to give up on them because they have been bullied by a trainer (who knows nothing about the BALANCE approach) to go back to a saddle that makes it easier to ride with straight legs. You know that their horse is going to be worse off because they will be returned to restriction and discomfort after experiencing comfort and freedom

Horses in the middle of a demanding training/competition schedule.

The timing of the change to a BALANCE saddle is important. For example, we will not supply someone with a new BALANCE saddle in the middle of a hard competition schedule unless the rider is willing to drop out of competition training for a while in order to allow their horse some time to assimilate the benefits of the BALANCE saddle in a progressive way. In the same way you would not expect a top athlete to instantly adapt to a new set of shoes that allow a different way of moving, even if the new way is technically better. To do such a thing would invite injury, because the body needs time to adapt.