

Quick Tips:

By Caroline Hodges

Caring For Your Miniature Tack

A good quality piece of miniature tack should last you many years, but only if it is as well looked after as a real saddle. Remember that miniature leather tack is fragile and should never be bought or used as a toy. Customised miniature tack is expensive. There is no getting around this, parts are expensive and the time that goes into producing one saddle for example can be up to and beyond 24 hours in some cases. Therefore, you do not want to receive your brand new saddle and then treat it roughly and wonder why it breaks! Here are a few tips for caring for and displaying your model tack.

- Never ever tug on straps and buckles – if it's not tightening, it's not going to tighten!
- Some buckles are so small that it is impossible to use fingers to put on your tack – Stablemate scale items for example. In this case, I use the end of a needle (not the sharp end) to poke the leather strap through the buckle. You can also use needle-nose pliers or tweezers, but be very careful these don't make contact with your models paintwork!
- After a Live Show, you're tired and want to get home and show off all your ribbons and trophies.... But... like with real horses, always untack your models and make sure all sticky wax is cleaned off of both horse and tack – you can do this with a fingernail or some warm water.
- Miniature leather saddles can be oiled just like real saddles! It will certainly extend the life of your tack and keep it looking smart. Always check that the product you want to use is suitable for the leather on your saddle – if you're not sure, don't try it! Naturally you should never oil rough suedes, only smoother leather. Also take care that you do not accidentally oil the hardware on your tack. These should be polished with a cloth and in extreme cases a metal cleaner, but I don't recommend this as it is difficult to use on such small items without making contact with the leather. And leather hates metal cleaner!

Horse Facts: Did you know?!

- The longest tail measured was 22ft long was grown by an American Palomino Horse named Chinook.



- Equinophobia is the Fear of horses.

-There is no such thing as a white horse. They are all called grey horses because they have little black and white hairs that combine to make them look white. Horses which are white with blue/brown eyes, a pink mouth, and pink ears are called Cremello, Perlino or American Cream.

- The word 'Dressage' comes from the French verb "dresser" meaning to train.

Live Show Dates for 2005:

- **March 5th 2005** – Hobby meeting at Rothersthorpe village hall, Northamptonshire. Contact: Jackie Radwanski at: j.radwanski@btopenworld.com

August 27th 2005- MHU Live (members only) Plymouth. Contact: Kirsty Maidment: stirky_meadowlands@hotmail.com

September 10th – MHS Live, Brierly, West Midlands. Contact: Jackie Beaman: jackiebeaman1@activemail.co.uk

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- Saddlebred
- Icelandic
- Spanish Barb