

## 5.2. Girthing technique:

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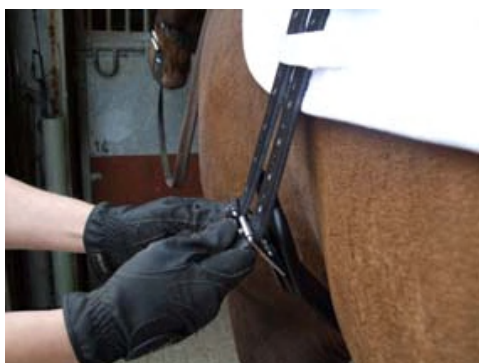
The unique features of the Wintec girth allow the user to employ a non-irritant method of girthing the horse, particularly in retraining a horse who has suffered discomfort in the past from tack or insensitive saddling methods.

Try this graduated method:

Buckle the girth loosely so that it is just touching the skin, and pull it into position over the sternum and behind the elbow. Make sure that the horse is standing squarely and not tucking his foreleg under his body.



*Hold a girth strap and, standing squarely balanced yourself, lean backwards and allow your bodyweight to gradually pull the girth towards you. The horse will naturally brace himself against this pull, and the elastic in the girth will start to engage.*



*Whilst holding the strap taught with one hand, slide the roller buckle up into the next hole and gradually release the strap. Because this method does not pinch, the horse will not notice the tightening. Repeat alternately with each strap until the girth is tight enough to mount.*



*Check and if necessary, tighten the girth again from the mounting block before mounting.*



*As soon as the rider is mounted, the girth should be tightened again; this is not because you need the girth tighter with a Solution saddle, but because the saddle will open and drop around the barrel, having the effect of loosening the girth.*

It is a good idea to loosen the girth before dismounting as when the weight of the rider is removed from the saddle it will spring up, having the effect of tightening the girth and making it more difficult to loosen from the ground. We only use and recommend the Wintec girth as this has some give in it which prevents overtightening. We also recommend that the only accurate way to check your girth is to take a pull on the girth straps – if it goes up a hole, it was too loose - do not lean down and put your hand under the girth to check it as this twists the flexible saddle and may make the girth feel quite tight. Some horses are sensitive to this and will tighten their rib cage against it.

It is possible that with a narrow horse the girth may seem tighter than normal. It is quite common for narrow horses to be ridden with a fairly loose girth on a conventional treed saddle because the clothes peg effect of the tree points can grip against the wither and hold the saddle firmly in place, even when mounting from the ground. This can cause injury to the dorsal spinal processes and the soft tissue support structures of the back. *The Solution* saddle's soft layering system will not damage the back.