



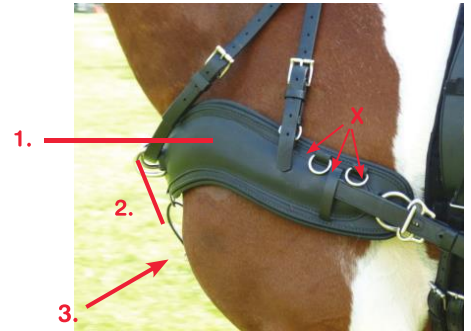
EMPATHY FITTING INSTRUCTIONS

It is important to pay attention to correct fitting. This is not a straight breastplate. (There is a tendency to fit it too low where a breastplate would usually lie) Position the breastplate so that it lies flat against the horse's chest (Angle fit) and at the correct height to leave the windpipe free, and the points of the shoulder free (Height fit).

1. **Height** - First look at the height at which your breastplate should fit. The bony shoulder joint should be clear of the breastplate, and positioned just below the upward sweep of the breastplate each side. The windpipe should be free of the breastplate, so that the windpipe is not restricted. Adjust the wither support strap to achieve the correct height. There are 3 positions for the wither support straps. (See X) The buckle pieces each side are removable so that you can select which one works best for your horse. The rear position will suit a wider chested horse, and the front position will suit narrower chest. Once you have established the correct height, you can look at the angle fit.
2. **Angle Fit** - The breastplate should lie against the horse, so that neither the top edge or the bottom edge dig in. The front straps of the wither are the balance straps that allow the collar to fit at the correct angle. Adjust the balance straps so that the collar lies evenly against the horse. All these options are there to be used, and help to custom fit the breastplate to suit the conformation of your particular horse. For example, a horse with a broad chest and low set neck (Fjord, Exmoor, Shetland etc) may need the breastplate to be tipped at a greater angle than a horse with a very upright shoulder or high set neck (Hackey/Gelderlander etc)
3. **False Martingale** - The martingale is padded, because it needs to fit more snugly than a normal false martingale. This helps to keep the breastplate in the optimum position against the horse.
4. **Once you have fitted the breastplate, there is a little more work to do!**

Observe carefully the first few times you use the Empathy Breastplate to see if your adjustments are working.

 - Is the breastplate staying flat against the horse when he is in draft? Get someone on the ground to walk alongside and watch, or record with the Slo-Mo video feature on your phone. It may be necessary to make further adjustments until you are satisfied that the breastplate is positioned correctly. Be aware that you need to work the horse in his new breastplate regularly before going off to do a tough marathon. The bearing area is slightly different to a straight breastplate. You need to allow the horse time to become accustomed to the new collar.
 - Can you see that shoulder joint working and flexing? If you can't see it, the breastplate is too low.
 - Every horse is a slightly different shape, so if you use the breastplate on more than one animal, you may need to re-adjust for each one. During the season your horse changes shape so be prepared to make changes to the fitting.
 - The Empathy breastplate is not as long as an ordinary breastplate. This is because it does not need to be! Pressure tests prove that the only part of the collar that really takes heavy pressure against the horse is the front and shoulder area, similar to a traditional neck collar.



If you have any questions call Team Bennington on 01400 281280 or email carriages@bennington.co.uk

www.benningtoncarriages.co.uk