

EQUIPMENT DIRECTIONS FOR TROTTING RACES IN SWEDEN

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These directions are issued by The Swedish Trotting Association.
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The racing authorities in the Nordic countries – Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden – have jointly listed the pieces of equipment permitted for use during trotting races in these four countries.

Equipment of new design has to be approved by Animal Welfare Department of The Swedish Trotting Association. No exceptions will be granted.

Introduction

The Swedish legislation on animal welfare is among the world's strictest. Obviously, this has implications for the trotting industry – not least when it comes to the equipment used during racing and training.

Since the arrival of 2018, trainers using equipment prohibited by the racing regulations will face increasingly harsh consequences – ranging from heavy fines to exclusion of individual horses from participation in a specific race. The ultimate responsibility for the equipment of a horse always rests on the trainer.

In order to prevent the risk for incidents causing trouble and frustration among visiting trainers, we have produced this brief manual on equipment. Below, you will find general guidelines for the design and adjustment of equipment used during racing and training. The following sections offer brief descriptions of equipment details that are permitted. It also provides directions for correct adjustment.

General requirements

The requirements concerning equipment are effective from two hours before post time of the first race during the racing day. This rule also applies to qualifiers and baby races.

All pieces of tack shall be original. Modifications or additions deviating from the original design are not allowed. All details shall be kept in good condition, serve their purpose efficiently and be adjusted correctly. Inappropriate adjustment is likely to compromise animal welfare as well as security.

Equipment causing the horse pain or discomfort – e.g. by the use of spikes or electric, radiologic and magnetic functions – are strictly forbidden. So is any measure to expand the respiratory passages of the horse. Equipment details are not allowed to protrude in a way keeping them at risk for interference with the finish camera.

Bridles and cheek pieces

Bridles shall be complete – with a nose band, a throat latch and a forehead strap. Bridle, harness, reins, crupper and straps shall be made of leather or a comparable non-elastic material. Wires or chains are forbidden.

The bridle shall be adjusted to ensure the driver efficient control, while saving the horse from pain and discomfort. Details with sharp edges or points are not allowed. Head halters that are tightened too hard or apply pressure too close to the nostrils of the horse may interfere with the respiration. A tight head halter may also affect the position of the bit and wrinkle the mucous membrane in the horse's mouth against the teeth, thus causing chafe.

Blind bridles, Norwegian blind bridles, telescopic bridles and Murphy blinds shall not reduce the field of view straight in front of the horse. It is also forbidden to blind one or both eyes of the horse completely or to use reflecting or sparkly material inside any kind of blinds. Kant-See-Back bridles and blinker hoods should always be adjusted to eliminate contact between the blinker cups/blinds and the soft tissue close to the eyes of the horse. As an alternative, Kant-See-Back bridles can have rolls of padded fleece or similar restricting the rearward field of vision.

Xylofonia halters shall be used with a safety strap or chain between the rein and the ring of the driving bit. Exception is made for halters having two layers of leather united by a seam or have been reinforced by a layer of strong added material. The security chain should be fixed by a buckle or a permanent ring. Neither



Trotter with basic equipment.



A bridle of leather, with a pre-fixed overcheck and an over-check bit.



A Kant-See-Back bridle restricts the field of vision behind the horse.



Xylofonia halter

the Xylofonia halter nor the security strap/chain should be attached to the bit or the rein with a snap hook.

Micklem bridles can be used – with or without bit clips.

Hackamores (trotting version) or Kineton halters are allowed. The shanks of the Hackamore shall be positioned behind the bit (see picture) and the bridle is adjusted with the neck strap and the strap running along the bridge of the nose.

A shadow roll must not limit the field of vision in the forward direction. Therefore, it is important to ensure that the horse have unrestricted vision forwards also when the overcheck is being attached to the harness. Also “brush model” shadow shields are allowed.

Cotton or plastic foam padding, ear plugs and ear hoods are allowed. They can be used solely or combined with each other. To block the hearing of a horse completely is not permitted. Ear plugs and ear hoods can be permanent or of a “pull-out” design.

Puller nets, head pads and protective head masques are allowed. They should be made out of soft materials, shall not cause discomfort and shall not reduce the field of vision of the horse. The puller net should not be tightened too hard, otherwise risking compression of the nostrils and thus disturbed respiration. The use of lip cords is strictly forbidden.

Nose flaps are allowed. They have to be applied in a way eliminating the risk for interference with the finish camera.



Micklem bridle.



Micklem bridle with bit clips.



Trotting hackamore.



Horse with a shadow roll.



Pull-away ear hood.



Puller net.

Anti-choke rolls and anti-choke plates can be used. An anti-choke plate shall have a lining of leather or another firm material, alternatively have rounded edges.

Head poles shall have a telescopic design and shall not be carried during the post parade.

Running and elastic head poles are allowed. Regardless of type, a head pole shall always be fixed to a head halter. It is strictly forbidden to use burrs, spikes or any other addition on a head pole. Only one single head pole is permitted. Any kind of casing or other attire mounted on the reins is prohibited.

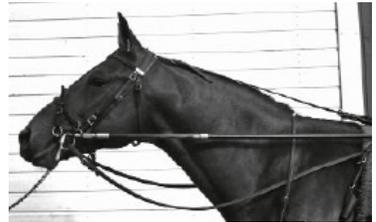
Running and standing martingales are allowed. The running version shall have its rings connected by a leather strap over the neck of the horse. The standing martingale shall have an elastic zone and shall be fixed to a head halter. Both varieties of martingale should allow the horse a natural head position. Corrective reins designed for saddle horses are forbidden.



Anti-choke roll.



Anti-choke plate.



Telescopic headpole.



Running headpole.



Martingale.

Bits

When hitched to a jogging cart or sulky within the racetrack area, all horses shall be controlled via a bit. This general rule also applies to horses training or racing under saddle. All kinds of bit shall have a symmetrical shape and dimensions proportionate to the mouth of the individual horse. The minimum thickness of the parts that are in contact with the corner of the horse's mouth is 9 millimetres.

The mouthpiece of a bit can have a maximum of two joints (three sections). All of them should have an oval or rounded shape and a smooth surface. Increase of the effect of the bit is allowed only by extension in the longitudinal direction. This added part can be fixed or flexible and shall not exceed a length of 80 millimetres. Other versions enhancing the effect – e.g. Pelham or Pessoa bits – are not allowed when driving.

Bits made from non-metallic materials – rubber, leather or plastics – shall have a core of steel or be used with a metallic safety chain. Regular controls are necessary in order to detect cracks or irregular structures caused by the horse's teeth. A bit can be stabilized in the mouth of the horse by shanks or plates on both sides.

It is forbidden to attach an overcheck bit to a driving bit or to otherwise combine various types of bits. All types of bits with a “snare” design are strictly forbidden, as are lip cords.

Below you will find a number of bits meeting the standards set by the Swedish racing regulations. Also bits other than the ones exposed here can be allowed, provided that they meet the general requirements.

A. Driving bits

Driving bit (basic)

This bit is a “first alternative” for most trainers. It has shanks preventing it from sliding. It can be straight or divided into two or three sections. This bit can be made of steel, rubber, plastics or leather. It should always have a core of steel or be used with a safety chain of steel. The version called Dr Bristol bit – with two sections and a plate in the middle – is allowed. All parts of the bit shall have a rounded profile.

Versions with a leather surface can be fixed to a chin strap connected with the overcheck – a design called Frisco June bit. Please observe that versions lined with rubber, leather and plastics have a fairly short life cycle. Therefore they have to be replaced with close intervals.

Crescendo bit

A Crescendo bit comprises two identical triangular parts that are united by a joint. The bit should be made out of stainless steel and the parts of the bit that are affecting the mouth of the horse shall have a minimum diameter of 7 millimetres.

Corrective bit

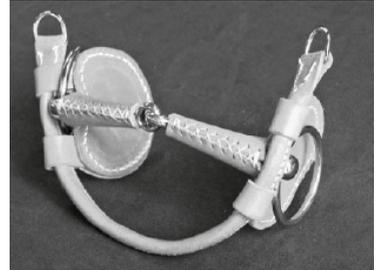
This bit can be rigid or have two symmetrical parts united by a joint. An extension on one or both sides is attached to the rein, thus increasing the effect of the bit. The extension can be rigid or flexible.

Corrective bit – Australian version

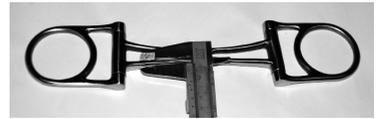
This version combines a straight bit with a metal frame under the chin of the horse. All parts of the bit should have a rounded profile.



Single-joint basic driving bit.



Frisco June bit.



Crescendo bit



Straight corrective bit.



Single-joint snaffle bit with rubber lining.



Järvsöfaks bit.



Australian corrective bit with leather lining.

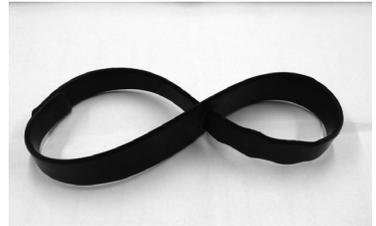
Tongue control

Tongue plates are permitted by the racing regulations. So are bits designed for control of the tongue – provided that they meet the general requirements defined in the racing regulations.

Tongue ties shall be made of leather, rubber or synthetic materials. They shall also be designed and manufactured for their particular function. A certain degree of elasticity is allowed in order to ensure mobility of the tongue. The part of the tie in contact with the tongue shall have a minimum width of 10 millimetres. Use of flexible bandage and other “homemade” solutions are not allowed. The tongue tie shall never block the circulation of blood in the tongue. Bit holders of rubber are allowed.



Tongue tie.



Approved variety of tongue tie.

B. Overcheck & overcheck bits

The overcheck shall be attached to the overcheck bit or to a chin strap – never to the driving bit. The chin strap shall be made of leather or another non-elastic material.

A preset overcheck should be made of leather or another non-elastic material. It shall not be shortened to a degree causing the horse discomfort. After consulting the official race-track veterinarian, the ringmaster has the authority to order lengthening of the overcheck.

An adjustable overcheck should be made of leather or another non-elastic material. A stopper shall be mounted at the normal overcheck position for the individual horse. A French type stopping mechanism using a chain is allowed, provided that the other requirements for an adjustable overcheck are met.

All overcheck bits shall be straight – that is without joints. They shall also have rounded profiles and a design eliminating the risk for injury in the mouth of the horse. Overcheck bits can have a surface lining of leather, rubber or plastics. An overcheck bit can also be combined with a chin strap. If a curb chain is used instead of a chin strap, it should run through a soft tunnel in order to prevent friction and chafe.

Bits of the type often referred to as Crit Davis bits are allowed. They shall have rounded profiles. When fitted with a plate, this should be smooth, homogeneous and have a maximum length of 35 millimetres.



An adjustable overcheck with stopper mechanism.



A straight overcheck bit.



Double-bar overcheck bit.



Horse with a double-bar overcheck bit.

Also overcheck bits with double bars are allowed. See picture for correct adjustment.

The overcheck versions usually referred to as Raymond check, O'Mara check or Canadian check are allowed, but solely in these versions. The chin strap shall be made of leather or another non-elastic material. If a curb chain is used instead of chin strap, it should have a soft lining in order to prevent chafe. For correct/incorrect adjustment, see picture. A Raymond check with a fixed V-shaped hoop under the chin of the horse is not allowed.

Two varieties of so called Sideway check are allowed. One of them has rings through which the reins are running. The other has a neck-piece with rings through which the overcheck is running.



Raymond check.



A poorly adjusted Raymond check.



O'Mara overcheck.



Canadian overcheck.



Approved variety of sideways overcheck.



Approved variety of sideways overcheck.

The harness

All parts of the harness shall be clean and kept in good condition. The harness shall also be adjusted correctly. It should always be fitted with a security strap – or if Quick Hitch is not used – with an upper and a lower hitching strap combined. When racing, a horse shall always wear a breast collar and crupper. The reins shall run through the harness rings and be fixed directly to the bit via buckles with reinforcement of leather, metal or synthetic material. Snap hooks or similar are not allowed. The reins should be complete. In sulky races, handholds shall always be used.



Harness with Quick Hitch.

Protective gear

Protective gear like knee boots, shin boots, bell boots and bandages shall not have spikes, magnetic contraptions, etc.

All kind of protective gear shall be clean and properly adjusted. Elastic bandages shall have a wrap underneath and shall not block the circulation of the leg. Too loose bandaging may compromise the protective function as well as security.



Hind boot and bell boots.

Additional equipment

A kicking strap should be made of leather or a comparable non-elastic material. It should be fastened to the shafts by buckles. The same requirements apply to rearing straps.

Gaiting straps shall be fixed to the shaft and to the frame of the sulky.

Gliders can be used and have to be adjusted in a way preventing friction and chafe.

A tail tie should consist of a thin leather strap or comparable. Rope, plastic tape, metal thread or chains are not allowed for this purpose. The tie should be fixed to the exterior hair of the tail – not to the tail itself. The tie should be fixed in the rear of the sulky and always behind the foot support.

A stiff-tail crupper can be used.

A rubber flap can be used in order to prevent the driver and the equipment from being smeared with manure. Its design and adjustment shall prevent the horse from pain and discomfort.

A suspensor protects the testicles of stallions and colts from track gravel and from being crammed between the hind legs. A suspensor shall not cause the horse pain or discomfort.

Equipment preventing mares and fillies from sucking air into the vagina shall have proper dimensions. It should also be kept clean and be as discreet as possible.



Kicking strap.



Rearing strap.



Gaiting strap.



Tail tie.

Blankets used during driving should be of proper size and fit the individual horse well.

Wireless pulse meters – also versions with velocity sensors – are allowed.



Stiff-tail crupper



Rubber flap (faeces shield).



Suspensor for colts/stallions viewed from behind.



Suspensor preventing mares/fillies from sucking air into the vagina.

Racing under saddle

In addition to the bits that are allowed in sulky races, Pessoa bits and Pelham bits can be used in mounted races. A Pelham bit has an extension of several rings. This extension shall not exceed 80 millimetres.

A straight Pelham bit with a minimum diameter of 13 millimetres is allowed when an overcheck bit is not used, while a Pelham bit with a joint can be combined with an overcheck bit. A curb chain with soft “tunnel” lining is obligatory when using a Pelham bit. The lower extension of a Pelham bit shall not exceed 80 millimetres. A leather strap (adapter) connecting the snaffle and the curb section of the bit is allowed.

Single or double reins and reins with multiple hand holds are permitted. It is forbidden to attach the reins to the bit with snap hooks or similar. When using double reins, one of them can be fixed to the head halter. In all races started behind mobile gates, horses shall wear an overcheck.

In races under saddle, the head pole shall be fixed to the saddle – either to the overcheck hook or to the buckle of the girth on the side of the saddle. Irish martingales are allowed, while the use of tail ties is not.

The saddles used shall be (English style) riding saddles, monté saddles or thoroughbred racing saddles. A crupper and a breast collar (or similar) is obligatory. Elastic girths have to have a minimum width of 10 millimetres. If the girth has no more than one buckle on each side, an extra girth or an overgirth will be required.



Pessoa bit.



Pelham bit with curb chain.



Irish martingale.



Monté saddle.

Stirrups are always required. They should have a minimal inner width of 90 millimetres. Automatic safety stirrups and stirrups with a curved outside profile can be used. Safety stirrups with rubber lockings are not allowed.



Single-buckle saddle girth with an overgirth.

Racing bikes

Basic requirements

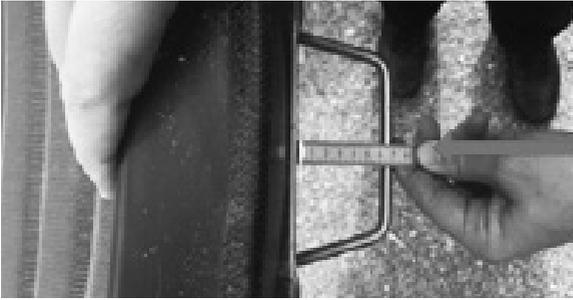
- Maximum width – 165 centimetres.
- Two shafts.
- Two wheels – massive or with wheel covers in optional colours.
- The distance between the wheel and the wheel fork shall not exceed 60 millimetres.
- Sulkies without an outside wheel fork should have a yoke mounted above the wheel. Its maximum distance from the wheel is 60 millimetres.

A metal bow/support behind the sulky seat cannot be used if it protrudes more than 60 millimetres from the seat. This applies to all racing bikes, regardless of brand.

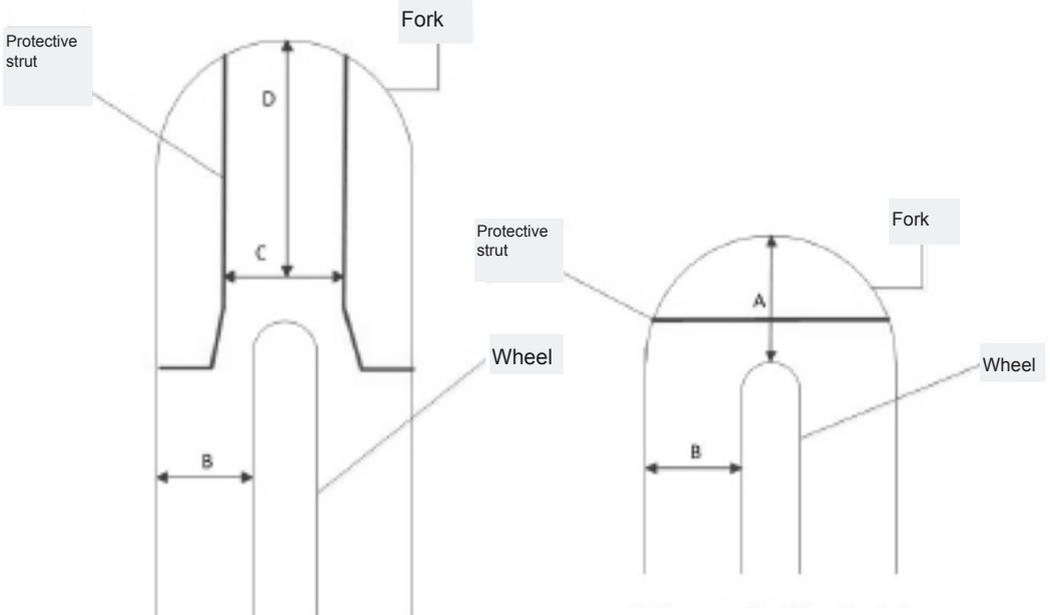
Holes in the rims of the sulky wheels shall not exceed 60 millimetres if the wheels are not covered by comprehensive wheel covers.

A list of sulkies approved for use in Sweden is found on the website www.travsport.se. Horses staying temporarily in Sweden while being trained by a foreign trainer are allowed to use other sulkies, provided that these sulkies are allowed in the residential country of the trainer and meet the basic standards listed above.

Repair and modifications on the sulky should meet the standards for professional craftsmanship. The origin of a sulky shall always be traceable via a mark of origin from the manufacturer.



A metal bow/support behind the sulky seat is allowed to protrude no more than 60 millimetres from the seat.



Adjustable bike

C=Maximum width 60millimetres
 D=If C is maximum 60 millimetres,
 there is no vertical limit for D.

Traditional bike (fixed measures)

A=The vertical measure between the highest part of the wheel and the upper inside of the fork shall not exceed 60 millimetres.
 B: The horizontal measure between the wheel and the inside of the fork shall not exceed 60 millimetres.