



Attaching Curb Bit Hooks and Chain

Almost every curb-style bit comes with a curb chain and hooks. Some bits come with the curb hooks already mounted on the bit, but for those bits that don't, the challenge of how to attach them is real for some less-experienced equestrians. It is important to properly mount the hooks and adjust the chain for the best performance of the horse.

Regular curb hooks come in a left hook and a right hook.

This is so when they are mounted on the bit correctly, they don't pinch the skin of the horse. The rounder top circle attaches to the ring on the purchase (the part of the bit above the mouthpiece), and the opening goes to the outside of the bit. The longer hook is where the chain attaches and goes to the "back" of the bit. In the photo at left, the top hook is the right hook, and the bottom hook is the left hook when looking at the back of the bit like the photo at right.



You can see how the openings of the curb hooks are to the outside of the bit away from the horse's face, and the chain is hanging to the back of the bit.



Circle (or Conrad) hooks lay flatter on the horse's jaw than the regular hooks above. They don't have a right and a left hook, but they should still be attached so that the opening attachment is to the outside of the bit away from the horse's face. The rounder ring on the hook attaches to the ring on the purchase of the bit. The longer hook is where the chain attaches.



To attach the curb hooks to the bit, you will need a strong pliers, as the hooks are fairly tough. We find that a needle nose pliers works the best. Once you get them in the right location on the bit, squeeze the ring on the hook shut so the hooks can't come off the bit, again, with the opening to the outside of the bit away from the horse's jaw. If your curb-style bit comes with regular hooks and you want to change to the circle-style hooks, you just have to use those same pliers to remove the regular hooks and replace them with the circle hooks.

IVC Carriage

© IVC Carriage

E9432A SOUTH AVENUE • REEDSBURG, WI 53959
608.393.0598

www.ivccarriage.com • info@ivccarriage.com



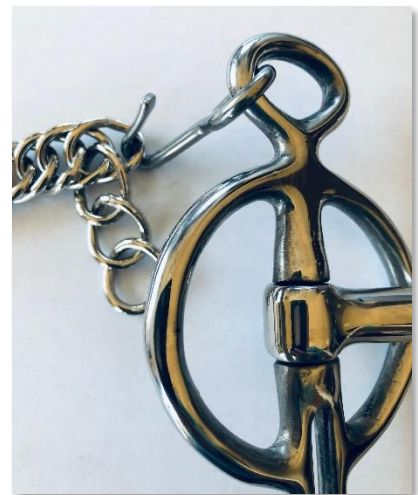
Curb chains need to be twisted in the proper direction, so they lay flat on the horse's jaw (left). If they are twisted in the wrong direction, they will be wider and more bumpy (right).



The curb chain is adjusted by putting a link on the hook closer to the middle of the chain (right). If the curb chain is too loose, the bit can over-rotate if the rein is in a lower



setting on the bit shank. If the chain is too tight, the chain will engage quickly on the horse's jaw, and can actually pull the shanks of the bit forward. The curb chain should be adjusted according to your horse's preference (and other factors), but if you have more than a couple of rings hanging off the hook, you probably need a shorter chain, or you can cut some of the links off the chain with a strong tin snips or wire cutters. We have multiple length chains we keep to use with our horses.



Some people will pinch the off-side curb hook tight so that the chain can't come off and will stay with the bit (above left). We prefer not to do that, as it limits the adjustability of the chain on the horse's head. We leave both sides of the hook open (above right).



If your horse highly objects to the chain on a curb-style bit, you can use a padded chain guard, or a strap instead of a chain. If you need more help in understanding how to attach the curb hooks and chain, feel free to contact us.



IVC Carriage

© IVC Carriage

E9432A SOUTH AVENUE • REEDSBURG, WI 53959
608.393.0598

www.ivccarriage.com • info@ivccarriage.com