

COWBOY TOUCH CART

Lariat? Lasso? Rope?

A lariat was usually made of braided horsehair. A lasso was made from rawhide, and a rope consisted of manila or hemp. No matter the name or material, it was a stiffened rope with a running noose which allowed the cowboy to easily throw the wide loop onto the horns, head, or feet of an animal and then quickly release the loop while remaining on the back of a horse. With the end of the rope tied to the saddle horn, the horse could be used as a sort of tow truck with a winch.

Cow Hide

Tanned cow hides were a valuable by-product of the ranching industry and known to be thicker, stronger, more durable, and less prone to cracking than other animal leather. Cow leather is flexible, naturally water repellent, and resists sun and heat damage. Cow hide leather was used for clothing, horse gear, boots, and chaps. With the hair left on, each hide is distinctly different in color and pattern and was a popular upholstery fabric in both the U.S. and Europe in the 1800s.

Spurs

Simple or ornately elaborate, spurs strapped on a boot have become an ultimate expression of the American cowboy. Originating from the Mexican vaqueros, spurs are as essential as reins for guiding a horse. Well trained cow horses were taught to respond to leg pressure cues and spurs were often used as gentle reinforcement when the cowboy was engaged in roping activities. Spurs do not hurt the horse. These spurs are sized for a child's boot.

Gourd Water Bottle

Having plenty of water was essential for cowboys traveling long distances. Gourds (a member of the squash family) of all sizes were popular for carrying water and dried food items. These easy-to-make canteens were created by removing the seeds, then drying and coating the gourd insides with beeswax. Adding a removable stopper made it a reusable lightweight, watertight, and waterproof container.

Powder Horn

In the days of black powder weapons, bullets and powder were carried separately. A gun powder horn was generally created from cow, ox, or buffalo horn. Animal horn was uniquely suited for the purpose because it could be easily hollowed, and more importantly, it was completely waterproof. "Keepin' yer powder dry" was of utmost importance because wet gunpowder was totally useless.

Saddle

This is a trail-style saddle that was made by the Naumann Saddle Shop in Leander, Texas. This style of saddle was made for the comfort of the rider on long trips and would have been the same kind of saddle that was used by cowboys on cattle drives. This particular saddle is more detailed and has ornate tooling and decorative metal pieces than those made for ranch hands of the American West.