

Gate and Slip Rail in Tetrathlon

The gate and slip rail are obstacles that makes tetrathlon so different from other equestrian events, here is how to do them, how to practise them and where to find the rules.

If you are a junior level or above, you have 60 seconds to do both the gate and slip rail (your time for both gets added onto your total course time allowance). However, if you cannot put the string back on the gate keep trying for the 60 seconds, you will get penalties but will be allowed to continue with the course, (All the rules about the gate and slip rail and penalties can be found in the tetrathlon rule book

The Gate:

- The gate is attached to a post via a loop of rope or string you have to lift the rope off the post.
- Open the gate, walk through, close the gate and put the rope back on the post. A video is attached below showing how a gate is completed.
- You will be timed from the first moment that you touch the gate until the string is back on the post.
- You shouldn't jump the gate but if you do you are allowed to go back round and try the obstacle again (60 penalties for jumping the gate)

The Slip-Rail:

- For the slip rail you must dismount, pull the top rail of the slip rail out of its slot on one side only and place it on the ground either side of the lower rail (the lower rail is 30cm and should not be moved).
- Walk your horse over the rail, put the rail back up and remount your horse. A video is attached below showing how a slip rail is completed.
- There are hay bales or a mounting block to help riders remount, if you have to use outside assistance you will get 60 penalties.
- You will be timed from the moment you take your feet out of the stirrups until you are remounted.

My name is Brooke England and I compete in tetrathlon as an open girl. Before I start both obstacles, I often take a second to compose myself; I take a deep breath and then begin. Once I have finished, I take another second to breathe again and pat my horse. I find this routine helps calm both me and my horse before these obstacles and gives us both a moment to catch our breaths. I think it is really important for a horse and rider to have a routine (it can be like mine or any that work for a horse and rider) as it helps get you both in the right mindset.

This is an example of how I complete a gate in a competition:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h2IA7A999hA&feature=youtu.be> -in this video you can see my horse gets a bit excited and steps away from the gate, it's really important to keep calm, pat your horse and then try again as sometimes they get frustrated that the jumping has stopped and just want to go. When I do a gate and my horse is excited, I make sure she is always facing the gate, as if she isn't facing the gate she is ready to set off.

This is an example of how I complete a slip rail in a competition:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KChgKyU_jtY&feature=youtu.be -in this video to remount my horse I have her head over the slip rail, my horse loves cross country and gets excited so this is a method I use to prevent her from trying to carry on the course without me. I will also talk to her and pat her if she starts to get stressed.

How to practise the gate and slip rail:

For the gate:

-Use any gate (try and find one without a latch which may get caught on your leg or your horse as you go through, or wrap a towel round the catch to avoid injury), attach it by string or rope to the fence post next to it.

-Stop at the gate, either parallel to the gate or with the horses head over it, open the gate, walk through, close it and reattach the string.

-Keep practising until you and your horse are comfortable with how to do a gate.

-Now try to do something at speed before doing the gate (e.g. a lap of canter or a couple of jumps) so you mirror the tetrathlon environment- as the gate normally comes in the middle of the round.

-Then time yourself and see if you can complete it within 30 seconds.

-Remember- it takes time for you to learn a new skill so don't worry if it takes longer the first few times!

A video on how to set up your own tetrathlon gate:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mKWIAI1Fr8o&feature=youtu.be>

For the slip rail:

-Set up a fence with 2 poles (you can use fence wings or anything else like that to put the poles on), put the one pole at 30cm (the lower rail that isn't moved) and the other 1 meter or higher (the top rail).

-Stop at the slip rail, dismount your horse, place one side of the top rail on the floor, lead your horse over it, put the pole back up and remount your horse.

-Keep practising until you and your horse are comfortable with how to do a slip rail.

-Now try to do something at speed before doing the slip rail (e.g. a lap of canter or a couple of jumps) so you mirror the tetrathlon environment.

-Then time yourself and see if you can complete it within 30 seconds.

-Remember- it takes time for you to learn a new skill so don't worry if it takes longer the first few times!

A video on how to set up your own tetrathlon slip rail:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o6xbQzz6h4A&feature=youtu.be>

Challenge- Can you beat my times?

It took me 13 seconds to do the gate at Tetrathlon champs 2019- send your videos and times in!

It took me 24 seconds to do the slip rail at Tetrathlon champs 2019- send your videos and times in!!