

# VET GATES

*Preparation makes vet gates easy*



This certainly isn't an exhaustive list – and it would be great for those who've done a vet gate to share what they've found useful too. Whether you're new to vet gates or experienced, there's always something new to try.

## FIRST THINGS FIRST

Establish where the vet gate is:

- Is there a designated area?
- Or can you return to your trailer?

This will affect what you take with you and how you plan your time. If there's a designated area, allow time to set up – and don't forget a box to keep anything you need dry.

## ON ARRIVAL INTO THE VET GATE

Your priorities:

- Un-tack & make your horse comfortable.
- Pick out feet
- Present back to the vet.

As long as your horse is sound, you're aiming for a heart rate of 64 bpm or below.

Once you've passed your vetting, you'll usually have 30-40 minutes before heading out on the next loop – but always confirm the official hold time before you start so you can plan properly.

## WHAT MIGHT YOU NEED

Every setup is different, but useful items can include:

- Water for washing (sponge and/or scoop)
- Water for drinking, mash or flavoured options
- Hard feed / hay
- Lead rope (and headcollar if not using a combination bridle)
- Brush and hoof pick
- Clean, dry numnah, boots and spare tack if needed
- Cooler rug or waterproof (weather dependent)
- Food and drink for yourself
- Spare clothes – dry boots and socks are invaluable if it's wet

- Box to keep items dry
- Something to sit on
- Mounting block if require
- Saddle rack or somewhere safe to put your tack

#### MORE THAN JUST A CHECK

Your vet gate is a chance to:

- Check in with your crew (if you have one)
- Confirm your plan for the next loop
- Take a breath
- Refuel
- And yes... nip to the loo!

It can take some horses a few rides to settle at a vet gate, particularly if it's in a separate designated area. That's completely normal.

#### WATCH & LEARN

Vet gates can feel daunting at first – but preparation really is key.

- Watch one.
- Speak to people.
- Ask questions.

Most members are more than happy to share what works for them. It often takes a few rides to refine your system – but don't be afraid to give a vet gate a try.

