

# GUIDELINES FOR CATEGORY A CROSS COUNTRY COURSE

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

The indications provided below are an integral part of the rules and must be followed in accordance with the present guidelines. Failure to comply may cause for the results of the competition not to be acceptable.

This includes the number of fences, the profiles of the fences, their type and the order in which they are jumped. If absolutely necessary, a fence can be replaced by another fence of the same type. Adjustments to the fence type, profile and/or order based on security purposes due to positioning may exceptionally be granted if deemed necessary by the TD. Any adjustments not within these mandatory guidelines need to be discussed and agreed on by the TD and CD, and proper justification must be provided along with the TD report.

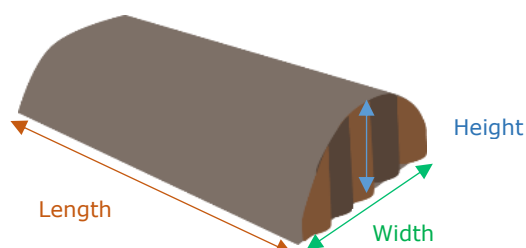
There will be NO exception/adjustment however regarding the number of fences included in the course which **MUST** comply with these guidelines.

## MANDATORY TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS:

<b># of Fences:</b>	12 (14 efforts) of 95cm-1.00m high maximum with one water jump
<b>Meters/Efforts:</b>	Should not be more than an average of one jumping effort per commenced 100 meters, but a minimum distance of 80m between some fences is acceptable. Although there is no maximum imposed, it is strongly recommended not to have more than 140m between fences.
<b>Length:</b>	1800 m
<b>Speed:</b>	450 m/min
<b>Optimum Time:</b>	240 seconds

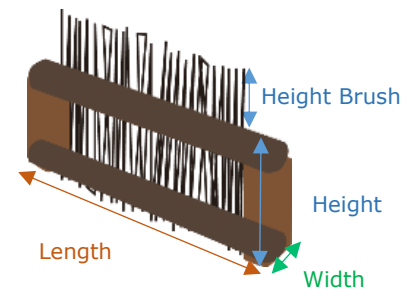
## FENCES' PROFILE:

Fence #	Fence Type	Height	Width	Length
1	Half Moon / Round	90cm	1.00m	4.00m

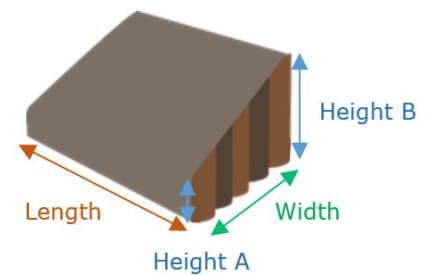


## CATEGORY A – Cross Country Fences Descriptions

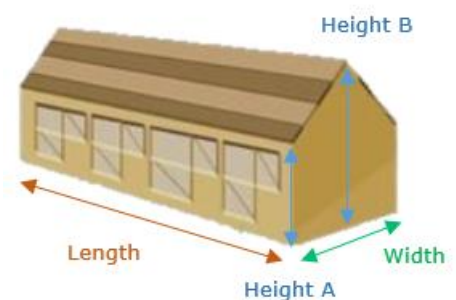
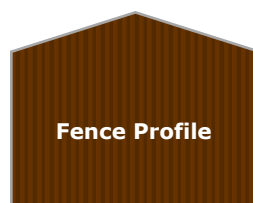
Fence #	Fence Type	Height	Width	Length
2	Brush	80cm / 20cm (brush)	80cm	4.00m



Fence #	Fence Type	Height	Width	Length
3	Spread – Veg display	A - 70cm B - 100cm	100-110cm	4.00m



Fence #	Fence Type	Height	Width	Length
4	House	A - 60cm B - 100cm	100cm	4.00m

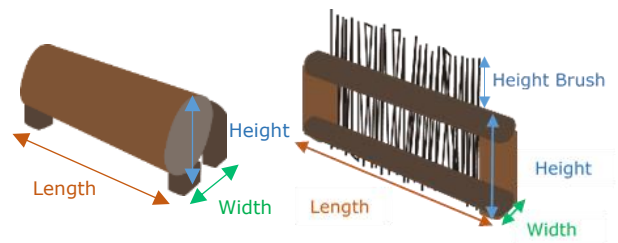


## CATEGORY A – Cross Country Fences Descriptions

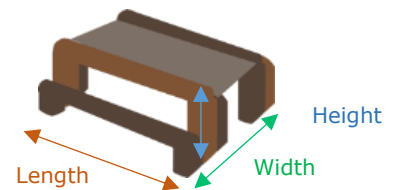
Fence #	Fence Type	Height	Width	Length
5a	Log	95cm	70cm	4.00m

Distance between 5a-5b: 18–19m and on a gentle turn of no more than 30 degrees

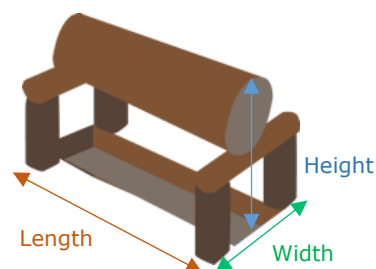
5b	Brush	80cm / 15cm (brush)	70cm	4.00m
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Fence #	Fence Type	Height	Width	Length
6	Table / Square Spread	1.00m	1.00m	4.00m



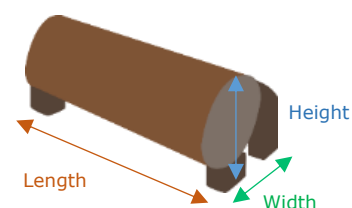
Fence #	Fence Type	Height	Width	Length
7	Trakehner	95cm	1.10m	4.00m





## CATEGORY A – Cross Country Fences Descriptions

Fence #	Fence Type	Height	Width	Length
8	Double Barrel / Round	95cm	70cm	1.80m-2.00m



Fence #	Fence Type	Height
9a	Water Step-In	50 cm from bank

Distance between 9a-9b: 12 to 16 meters in the water

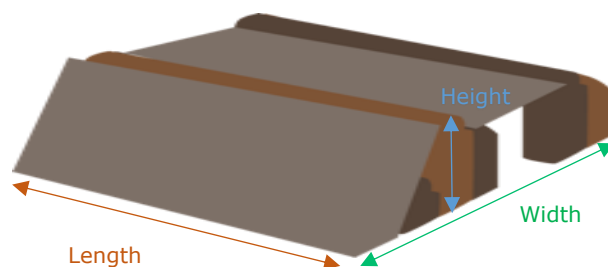
9b	Water Step-Out	50 cm to bank
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*A water jump/feature of some form is strongly advised, however a water jump is not compulsory in year 1 of the Series if there is not currently such a feature built.*

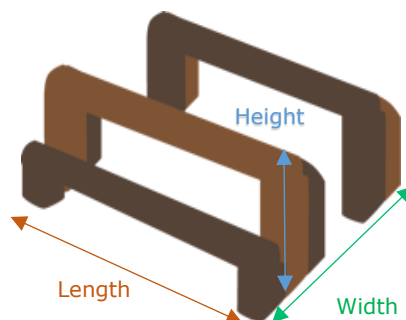
*If such is the case, the Course Builder must replace the water with a combination of two efforts being jumped 11m a part. The jumps would have a profile similar to a log (see 5a) or a palisade panel i.e. not a great deal of base spread.*

Fence #	Fence Type	Height	Width	Length
10	House / Square Spread	1.00m	1.10m	4.00m

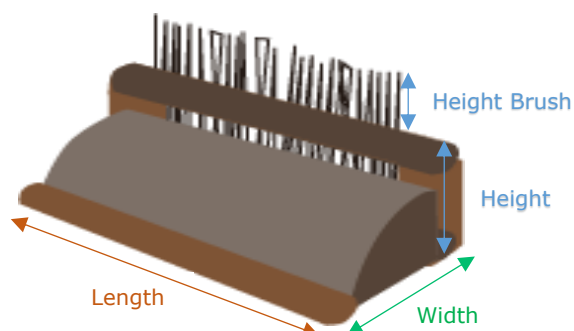


## CATEGORY A – Cross Country Fences Descriptions

Fence #	Fence Type	Height	Width	Length
11	Oxer / Square Spread	95cm	1.10m	4.00m



Fence #	Fence Type	Height	Width	Length
12	Quarter Moon + Brush	95cm / 20cm (brush)	95cm	4.00m



## DESIGN PHILOSOPHY

The first 4 jumps are designed to encourage forward riding – up to height, with some top spread & base spread.

The first combination is a simple combination on a turn

Then there is a few fences which again encourage forward riding.

Around fence 8 there is a narrower style fence to also show that the rider has control – at this level the fence is still relatively wide

The water feature, if it has a step into the water must have an alternative to this so a horse can go into the water without jumping down the step. Horses should have to jump up a step out of the water.

The final few fences can be larger but straight forward.

This is even for a 100cm class a relatively technically easy track which is suitable for the entry level of the sport and the first year of the series.

## **HOW TO BUILD THE COURSE**

On the basis of the information provided in this document as well as the Guidelines for Course Builders, each country will be responsible for building their Cross Country course in accordance with the rules and requirements.

No course will be identical because of the different nature of the terrain, path, etc., however the following conditions must be respected:

- Course length: 1800m
- Speed: 500 m/min
- Optimum time: 216 seconds

### **Guidelines about the metres per effort (mpe)**

#### Start and Finish:

The first & last obstacle of Cross Country shall be not less than 20 metres no more than 50 metres from the starting and/or finishing line.

#### Distance between fences:

In general there should not be more than an average of one jumping effort per commenced 100m over the entire length of the course. Taking into consideration the terrain (turns, slopes, etc.), this distance may need to be slightly adjusted to make sure fences are positioned in such a way that it is safe for the horses to jump them. The minimum distance should however be of 80 meters and preferably maximum 140 meters in between fences. Any adjustments not within these mandatory guidelines need to be discussed and agreed on by the TD and CD, and proper justification must be provided along with the TD report. As stated in the "Cross Country Guide for Officials", too much distance between fences can also have a negative effect on a Horse's performance, causing the Horse to "switch off". Strong consideration should be given to at least a moderate bend approaching a fence after a long gallop.

Although the distances between fences may vary in each country the overall length of the course will be the same.

**Since each course might be different in each country, it is the responsibility of the Officials (TD, CD and PGJ) to make sure the course is of the appropriate length from start to finish in order for the Optimum Time to be respected as it will be the basis of scoring all around the world. The same is true for the order of the fences and their profile.**

Per reminder the calculation of the Optimum Time is based on the distance chosen, carried out at the chosen speed (FEI ERs 545.2.1).

After identifying the area/path/field which will be used for the Derby and preparing the footing, the course builders and their crew may start to build the course according to the plans.

1. Draw the place of each fence on the plan to facilitate the positioning/construction on the ground.  
Make copies of the plan for each assistant.  
If you have enough people with knowledge in course building, divide up the course among them.  
If not, at least one course builder should be available to lead the group.
2. Each builder will try to build in his own area/field.  
They have to find the middle point of the fences (middle of the pole) to measure the distances between fences, then do the same for combinations.

## **Ground Lines**

CDs and all officials need to assist and encourage horses to take off at a good point. There are several ways to do this: one of which is to help horses with their depth perception. There are 3 key reference points which it is believed will assist horses with this: one on either side of the fence and one in the centre.

Research has shown that in order to get over a fence without catching a leg on the leading edge, a horse must be no closer at the point of take off than:

- 1.8m when travelling at 600m/min
- 1.35m when travelling at 450m/min
- 0.9m when travelling at 300m/min

The point of take-off is not the same as the ground line when measuring Base Spread.

With this information it is possible to consider ground lines in a fresh light.

- Ground lines are intended to help horses read the fence and identify the leading edge.
- Ground lines should be used to improve the profile of fences and to help prevent horses getting too 'deep' to a fence.
- The height of the dressing in front of a fence is equally as important as how far in front of the fence a ground line may be.
- Unless there are exceptional circumstances, ground lines should always be used on fences at all levels.
- An additional ground line is not compulsory for fences with a front leading edge of 50 cm or less.
- It is expected for there to be a discussion between the TD and CD as to the type of ground line to use.
- Ground lines can be rails, flowers/plants mulch/woodchip, it can be offcuts or anything suitable that will help or further improve the profile of a fence. It need not necessarily extend all the way along the front of the fence, but must remain consistent throughout the day.
- Ground lines should be used on steps out of water.
- A single rail must never be used without a ground line.
- False groundlines are not acceptable under any circumstances.
- Groundlines should stay consistent through the entire competition.
- Solid groundlines need to be set but not fixed if there is any chance that they may cause a leg trap.
- Solid ground line is part of the base spread measurement.
- Soft ground lines (such as mulch or flower) is not included in the in the base spread. They are put in front of a fence to help it to jump better.

## **What are the benefits of ground lines?**

The sport has an objective and a responsibility to do what it can to reduce rotational falls. Part of this relates to fence profiles which should help the horse read the question and help the shape of its jump.

Experience has shown that fences generally jump better if there is a ground line. It is believed that the height of ground line (to give an improved profile to the fence) is perhaps more important than how far out in front of the fence it is. There is a balance to be found between helping the horse and encouraging riders to go too fast.

In assessing a fence the horse has to process a lot of information in a short timeframe. We know that the closer the horses gets to the fence the more it draws information from the sides, therefore decoration on the sides of the fence helps keep the horse away from the leading edge,

## *CATEGORY A – Cross Country Fences Descriptions*

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while it is believed the ground line in the middle of the fence helps the horse identify the question from distance.

**Rather than ask the question “why would you put a ground line in?”, it is better to ask “why wouldn’t you use one?”**

**Anchoring or Securing of Portable Fences** – Refer to Guidelines for Course Builders.