

Beginners Tips and Basic Rules

Preparation Is Everything

Triathlon is three sports - swimming, riding and running, so before you reach race day it's a good idea to practice each discipline, until you feel confident you can make the distance.

If you feel you have a bit of a weakness in one area, spend some extra time training for that discipline. If swimming is not your strong point, apart from training to make the distance, try things like picking the busiest lane at the pool to get used to other swimmers in your personal space. If you are new to riding, practice turning around a cone, taking out your water bottle without wobbling all over the road and clipping in and out of your pedals (if using clip-in shoes). If running is your downfall, try running with a friend or group, taking different tracks, or adding in a weekly sprint session, to keep things interesting. These little things can help you gain confidence for race day.

If you are feeling nervous, another idea is to take a trip around the course prior to the race. A map of the course is available on the Bendigo Triathlon Club website www.bendigotriathlon.com.

Training

- Try some 'brick' sessions, ie. ride with a run immediately after. Or even a swim to bike session.
- Make sure you drink plenty of water even on the days you are not training. You don't have to over do it. As a general rule, if your urine is clear, then you should be hydrated.
- If you are feeling tired or run down, DON'T TRAIN! It will be more beneficial to rest completely and to start up again when you feel better.
- On a similar note; don't feel stressed if you can't do a training session. Just skip it, and move on. As a rough idea, your longer training days are the most beneficial, but sometimes missing a session is unavoidable. Not to worry!

Equipment

You don't have to have all the latest gear to get into triathlon.

To get started all you need is:

- Some bathers, a singlet and some shorts (optional)
- Some goggles
- A swim cap
- A towel
- A bike - of any description! road bike (preferred), mountain bike or hybrid.
- Bike shoes (if applicable)
- Helmet

- Running shoes
- Sunglasses
- Hat
- Water bottle/s
- Some warm clothes

Practice with your equipment prior to race day. Make sure your goggles don't leak or fog up, your bike is in working order and your shoes don't give you blisters.

It's a great idea to write yourself an equipment list and also a 'to-do' list for race morning. That way you won't forget things like your helmet, or to pump up your tyres.

Race Day Tips

Pre Race

Arrive early and register. Check that your bike is in a comfortable gear and your tyres are pumped up. Set up your transition area at the racks. There will be a race briefing 5-10 minutes prior to race start.

Swim

- This is a NON-WETSUIT swim.
- Before the swim start, organise yourself within your lane. Faster swimmers should move to the front, and weaker swimmers or swimmers who are less confident should start at the back.
- You will travel up one side and back the other side of your lane, so once racing, if you need to overtake someone, be careful not to run in to a swimmer coming the other way.
- Freestyle is the most common and advisable stroke most triathletes use, however any swim stroke (breaststroke, backstroke etc) is acceptable. If you begin with freestyle, but feel exhausted, changing to backstroke or breaststroke is fine. You do not have to tumble turn.
- Any artificial propulsion device, e.g. fin, paddle or flotation device is prohibited.
- If you are in trouble, please put your hand up.

Transition 1 (T1)

- Remove goggles and swim cap (this can be done on the run from the pool)
- Once at your transition area you may want to quickly put on some shorts and a singlet or t-shirt. Put on your runners (and socks if you think your shoes will rub) or bike shoes, helmet and sunglasses. You want to waste as little time as possible in transition, so move swiftly.
- DO NOT take your bike off the rack until you have your helmet secured on your head.

- Run or walk your bike to the mounting area, being careful of other competitors. DO NOT get on your bike until you are at the mounting line.

Ride

- Take the corners carefully, keeping your inside pedal up (away from the ground). Watch for cars and obey road rules. Cars do not have to stop for us.
- Keep to the left side of the road, unless overtaking. If you need to overtake someone, pass on the right hand side.
- You cannot sit behind someone (draft) on the bike. The front of your bike must be approximately 3 bike lengths away from the rear wheel of the bike in front of you. If you decide to overtake, you have around 15 seconds for the front of your bike to move ahead of the tip of the front wheel of the person you are overtaking. If you do not do this within 15 seconds you must move back out of the drafting zone before you may attempt to pass again. Once passed a competitor must within 15 seconds drop back out of the draft zone of the passing competitor before attempting to re-pass.
- Try to drink some water on the bike, it is the best time to hydrate, which is important for your run.
- Towards the very end of the ride put your bike in an easier gear and spin your legs a little faster. This will help loosen your legs up for the run.

Transition 2 (T2)

- Dismount your bike at the dismount line, and walk or run your bike to your transition area.
- DO NOT remove your helmet until your bike is racked.
- Once your bike is racked, take off your helmet, if wearing bike shoes, change into your runners. You may like to put on a hat and sunglasses (if not already on).

Run

- Prior to the race, put Vaseline inside your shoes on areas you think may rub, or sprinkle some baby powder in them to help them slip on easily.
- Stretchy laces are a great way to save time slipping your runners on.
- A drink station will be available. Keep your fluids up.
- If it is a hot day, pour some water over your head to keep cool.
- If you are feeling exhausted, drop back to a walk.

General Rules

- Always follow the directions of course officials.
- Do not receive assistance from family or friends around the course unless it is an emergency.
- Have fun!

If you have any other questions please don't hesitate to contact the club, or ask a friendly face on race day. I'm sure they will be happy to help.

Example Transition Layout

Extra thing to remember on race day...

- Spare water bottle
- Sunscreen
- Spare towel
- Banana or lollies before race start
- Membership Form (available to download from the Bendigo Triathlon Club website)
- Membership / Race Entry fee

