

Acclimation, First Timer, & Novice Driver Guide

Thank you for your participation in our program! We are passionate about teaching the art of high performance driving - we love it, and know you will too! Throughout this program you will learn special skills that will not only make you a better driver on the track, but also help improve your capabilities and safety on the street. This is a safe, fun and addictive experience that we will make sure you enjoy!

It is important to attend ALL Meetings, Classroom Sessions and Car Control Sessions (where applicable) ON TIME! Please pay careful attention to the time and your schedule, as these are MANDATORY. You will not get the full benefit of the program and will not get what you paid for when you miss parts of the program!

Throughout the course of our program you will work on specific driving competencies with your instructor. **First-Timers & Acclimation drivers will work on the below skills.** Most of these should be able to be mastered after one full day of the program, Acclimation will not be able to get to all of them. *If you are a Novice, please continue to work on these as needed, but you should already be proficient in at least 80% of them.*

	Practiced	Mastered	Needs Work		Practiced	Mastered	Needs Work
Ability to accept criticism constructively/good attitude, coachability				Ability to learn and apply instructor feedback			
Acknowledging flags				Appropriate grip on steering wheel			
Consistently seeing and appropriately responding to flags				Driving position - seat position/ability to reach pedals, etc.			
Following all rules and directions as set by policies and event officials				Good sportsmanship and demeanor with participants and officials			
Hand position on steering wheel				Knowing corner worker locations			
Knowing what flags mean				Mental preparedness/focus			
Mirror position				Not getting competitive			
Passing on correct side				Quickly and appropriately responding to flags			
Safely executing a pass				Safely re-entering the track after going off			
Situational awareness				Vehicle performs adequately and safely prepared			
"Safety First" attitude							

Some fundamental general concepts to keep in mind throughout the day include:

Smooth: smooth driving is key to maintaining vehicle control and quick, efficient maneuvering. Erratic harsh movements lead to loss of control, spin-outs, etc.

Don't fight slides: steer into a slide like in snow. This is important to avoid rollovers and accidents – when in doubt drive into the slide and when the vehicle is in a straight line again fully apply the brakes to safely go off-course.

Ease into corners and straights: start easy and work your way gradually toward more rapid corner entry speeds and higher top speeds on straights; going “all-out” without first testing and finding your limits is unsafe and risky.

Limit wheel turning: the key to fast, efficient cornering is turning the wheel the least amount possible and taking the straightest path through a corner.

Flags: learn your flags! It is absolutely critical to know what corner workers are trying to tell you – study the flags and their meanings below.

Use all the track surface: go edge-to-edge and use all available surface to take corners in a smooth, wide manner.

Corner workers: always look at each corner worker as you pass by their station; acknowledge any flag they give you with a simple wave.

“Lines”: there is not necessarily a specific, correct line in every corner or on every track. The most efficient path is the one that you can drive the most quickly through and this will vary by vehicle type, driveline, driver skill/comfort and other factors. Feel free to carefully experiment with different “lines”. Instructors can provide recommendations, feedback and general guidance but it is ultimately up to you to find the path around the track that works best for you.

Important notes on the SCHEDULE:

If you registered as:	Your Tech Decal shows:	Follow the schedule for:	On-track sessions labeled and/or announced as:
Novice	N (red)	N (red)	Novice
First Timer	FT (red)	FT (red)	AM: First-Timer PM: Novice
Acclimation Program	AC (pink)	AC (pink)	Acclimation

Car Control: These hands on, in-car sessions take place OFF the track in a controlled environment. You will work on skills in your own car such as late/early apex, over/under steer, trail braking, and more. These sessions are run by the Classroom Manager and this area may only be used under his directive at scheduled times. Car control sessions are not always available depending on the venue, please ask the classroom instructor if you are unsure whether car control exercises are available.

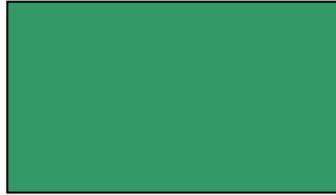
Instruction Process: Novices (**N**) will have several sessions of in-car instruction throughout the day, but will NOT have an instructor for every session.

We strive to have an instructor assigned to all First-Timers (**FT**), as well as Acclimation students (**AC**), however there may be a 1:2 instructor to student ratio. The first two on-track sessions for these students are pace-controlled for acclimation and learning purposes.

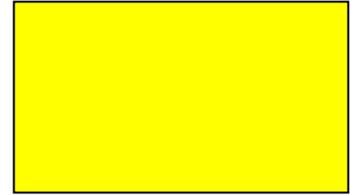
Flag Definitions Reminder (*memorize these*):

ROAD COURSE FLAGS

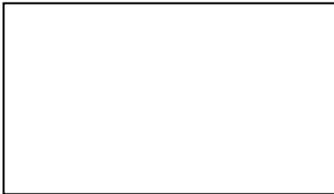
and their meanings:



GREEN: Course is clear, and session is underway. Generally indicates "all clear" from debris or other cautionary flag.



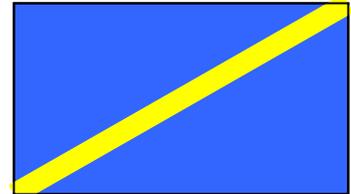
YELLOW: Take caution, danger, SLOW DOWN, no passing until past the emergency area. **DOUBLE YELLOW:** Full course caution.



WHITE: Slow moving vehicle ahead, (car, ambulance, emergency vehicle); pass with care.



YELLOW W/RED STRIPES: Be cautious, a slippery condition exists, oil or debris on the track.



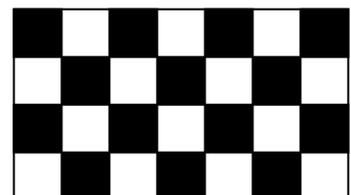
BLUE (with or without yellow stripe): Another car is close behind and is faster than you. Maintain a line and point them by when it is safe to pass.



BLACK: Indicates you are driving unsafely or have a mechanical problem (\$\$\$), slow down and pit in as soon as you reach track exit. Pull up to the starter station for instructions. If flag is shown standing at all stations all cars are to proceed to the pits.



RED: EXTREME DANGER, come to an immediate controlled stop at the side of the track. Wait for further instructions; do not proceed around track until told to do so.



CHECKERED: Indicates session has finished; begin cool down lap and proceed carefully to the pits.

***** If you would like to view this page in color, visit this link *****

https://autointerests.com/sites/all/files/event/files/2018_autointerests_novice_guide.pdf

Additional Curriculum: Novice drivers should work on the skills listed on the next page. It is important that First-Timers and Acclimation drivers **DO NOT JUMP AHEAD to these items until you have mastered 80% or more of the skills on the previous page.** It will take several days of driving to be able to practice and master all of the Experienced Novice skills.

NOVICE SKILLS LIST (do not work ahead on these in First-Timer or Acclimation):

	Practiced	Mastered	Needs Work		Practiced	Mastered	Needs Work
Adjusting target/reference points as instructed (turn-in, brake, etc.)				Appropriate brake inputs while cornering			
Appropriate throttle inputs while cornering				Appropriate timing of point-bys or other communications			
Basic mechanical knowledge of car				Checking gauges			
Clarity of point-bys, pit signals or other communications				Commitment to a turn			
Commitment to throttle				Consistent straight-line braking			
Determining appropriate passing sides when giving a point-by				Downshifting			
Engaging in consistent, predicable driving				Finding appropriate braking points			
Following an appropriate driving line and understanding its importance				Generously giving point-bys as appropriate			
Handling 2-wheels off				Identifying early apex			
Identifying late apex				Identifying lift-induced oversteer			
Identifying when NOT to shift				Identifying when NOT to take a pass			
Identifying when to shift				Identifying when to take a pass			
Knowing when car behind is faster and giving point-by promptly and in appropriate zone				Leaving nannies on when appropriate - traction/stability control			
Looking far enough ahead				Looking where you want the car to go			
Maintaining appropriate car spacing, enough to get a point-by but still safe				Mirror tap to indicate imminent point-by for car behind			
Mirrors - watching but not dwelling in				Not being pressured by traffic behind			
Not braking in corners (excl. trail braking)				Not coasting			
Not following car ahead, driving own line				Not over-driving or being overly-aggressive			
Not shuffling on steering wheel				Not target fixating			
Passing flag drills				Recognizing hazardous conditions and adjusting accordingly			
Recognizing signs of a mechanical failure and limping in				Self-awareness and communication of learning preference - audibly, visually, example, etc.			
Successful ability to create achievable goals per session/day/event				Throttle lift after giving point-by, not drag racing			
Throttle technique - smooth delivery vs. punching				Understanding corner types - decreasing radius, standard, double apex, etc.			
Upshifting				When to accelerate (give the car gas)			