



STARTER GUIDE FOR NEW TRIATHLETES

Presented by Triathlon Today and Challenge Family

Everything You Need to
Know to Enjoy Triathlon
THE BEST WAY POSSIBLE!

WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING AT RIGHT NOW IS A BEGINNER'S GUIDE FOR NEW TRIATHLETES

Triathlon has been a popular sport for decades, but it's still massively gaining popularity. It's even proven to be one of the fastest growing sports in the world. There are many races around the world, and as a participant you get to choose from a variety of distances and formats. In most cases you will swim, then bike, and finally run, but not only the distances of each discipline vary, also the order can be different in some occasions. And in some events, one of the disciplines might even be replaced with another sport, as for instance with duathlon, winter triathlon and/or cross triathlon.

New triathletes can feel quite overwhelmed by the amount of information that comes their way as they first enter this magical world of triathlon.

Because we like the beginner athletes to feel just as excited about the sport as the millions of other triathletes around the world, we created this guide. In it, you will find all the information you need to understand the sport. It's the information that you need to light that triathlon fire in your heart and to never lose sight of the magic of triathlon.

What's good to know is the guide you're looking at right now, provides you with a general introduction into the world of triathlon. We talk about the history of the sport, about federations and clubs, training, gear, races, distances, we share some practical tips, dive into the rules, distances and even added a checklist of things you'll need for a race. In the upcoming weeks, more guides will follow: there will be a starter's guide focused on swimming, cycling, running, and a guide that will help you master your transitions. That comes down to a total of five guides with all the information you need to kick-start your triathlon career.

**For now, enjoy reading.
And more importantly, enjoy triathlon!**

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WHERE IT ALL STARTED

THE MAGIC OF TRIATHLON

Your feet in the sand, surrounded by hundreds or even thousands of athletes; only a few seconds to go until you'll hear the gun go off and start your race. You can hear the rousing music, it's getting louder and louder, and you hear the speaker say the one-minute countdown has started. You look around, and all you see is tense faces. You feel the same: a weird sensation in your stomach and goosebumps on your arms. It's time to go all out.

There are not a lot of sports that can make you feel as emotional as triathlon. And no surprise really: it's not every day that you swim, bike and run consecutively. It's not an easy sport, and it's not for quitters. The feeling of euphoria, when you run across the finish line, is hard to describe. Happiness, pride, relief... they're all emotions that rush through your body. But also: you feel tired, exhausted actually. You've done something that many others can't. Most people wouldn't even want to think about it. You did something that was once considered impossible. You've finished a triathlon!

HOW AND WHEN DID TRIATHLON ORIGINATE?

Triathlon is a relatively young and new sport, especially looking at how it's practised today. Still, we go back almost one century in time, to 1920-1930. That's when the first triathlons were organized in France. People swam, biked and ran. However, the sport wasn't yet given the name "triathlon", it was called "Les Trois Sports", or "La Course des Débrouillards" and "La Course des Touche-a-Tout".

In that period, the distances were relatively short. Often people didn't swim more than a few hundred metres, they biked about 20 kilometres and then ran a few kilometres.

Towards the end of the seventies, when a few sports pioneers met up in Hawaii, that changed. The athletes wondered who would be the fittest of them: the swimmer, the cyclist, or the runner? There was only one way to find out, and so a race – on Honolulu – was organised: 3.8 kilometres of swimming, 180 kilometres of cycling and 42.2 kilometres of running. The winner got to call himself an 'Ironman'. A man made of steel: the best athlete at that time. Triathlon over the classic distance – up until today a real bucket-list triathlon, the distance that most appeals to the imagination – was born.

The race remained small for a few years, but once American media heard of it and picked it up, soon other countries would start organizing Long Distance triathlons too. The first country to follow was The Netherlands, where triathletes from all around the world got to race below sea level during the Holland Triathlon, nowadays known as Challenge Almere-Amsterdam. Soon after that, triathlons started to pop up in the most stunning places around the world. Slowly but steadily, organisers started to add other distances to the programme.

That's how the Middle Distance originated (1.9 kilometre swim, 90 kilo-metre bike, 21.1 kilometre run), the Olympic Distance (1500 metre swim, 40 kilometre bike, 10 kilometre run), the Sprint Distance (750 metre swim, 20 kilometre bike, 5 kilometre run) and also Junior Challenges gained popularity. These triathlons for children only cover a very short distance and are mostly meant to give them a taste of the sport. Many of today's elite triathletes, would have set their first steps into the sport through a format like this.

In the year of 2000, Sydney ended up being an important landmark for the development of triathlon.

It was then that triathlon made its Olympic debut with the Olympic Distance. Triathlon has since been an Olympic sport, and in the past 20 plus years we got to enjoy the most exciting races at the high level.

While Ironman and Challenge Family as event organisers still dominate in the field of Middle and Long Distance racing – also occasionally some shorter distances – we’ve seen some new organisations arise in the past few years. Super League Triathlon (SLT) and the Professional Triathletes Organization (PTO) are examples of this. Super League Triathlon is known for their extremely short races that mainly revolve around the elite athletes. In some of their races, athletes complete three extremely short triathlons in a row. Usually the races don’t take much longer than one hour. Thanks to SLT, indoor triathlon has been on the rise too. The PTO, on the other hand, works as a union that supports the professional triathletes. Not only does the PTO provide them with an end-of-the-year bonus, they also organise races with big prize purses.



FEDERATIONS

World Triathlon

World Triathlon is the most famous triathlon federation, although you won't directly deal with them as a beginner triathlete. This international federation was established in Lausanne, Switzerland in 1989. World Triathlon advocates for the interest of triathletes, duathletes and other athletes that race multisports.

Besides advocating for the interests of triathletes, World Triathlon also organises events. The organisation is responsible for the organisation of the Olympic Distance World Championships, the Long Distance World Championship and the World Triathlon Championship Series; which is a series in which the best short-distance triathletes in the world battle each other in places all around the world, such as Abu Dhabi, Hamburg, Leeds, and Montreal.

Even though World Triathlon has no continuous partnership with commercial organisations like Ironman and Challenge Family, at times they work together. World Triathlon often outsources the organisation of the big championships to local event organisers. The most recent example of that is the World Triathlon Long Distance Championship, which was organised by Challenge Almere-Amsterdam in 2021. The local team and World Triathlon worked closely together to organise a successful event. And that turned into a big success: Denmark's Kristian Hogenhaug and Dutch' Sarissa de Vries didn't only win the World Championship, they also broke all course records.

Continental Federations

Europe Triathlon, Asia Triathlon, Oceania Triathlon and Africa Triathlon. These continental federations belong

to World Triathlon and therefore carry similar responsibilities. However, not on a global level, but a continental level. Of course, at the end of the day, they have the same interests.

National Federations

For beginner triathletes, the most important federation will likely be the national federation. Because no matter your level, you can become a member of your national federation. You will usually receive some of their clothing, like a race suit. You pay to be part of the federation, which means you help to support triathlon within your country. The national federations support the sport of triathlon, they support event organisers, provide referees to make races fair, and in most cases they have collective insurances for triathletes. It's recommended to figure out all the benefits your national federation can provide you with, and decide whether you want to join the union or not.

As a member, you can register for (nearly) all national races. Athletes, who aren't members, will need to buy a day license for each race they enter. The price of these licenses will generally range between 30,00 and 50,00 euros per event. Without a license, you won't be allowed to race. Members won't need to acquire these day licenses.

To participate in a World Championship, European Championship or similar championship, you often need to register through your federations, and not through a local organiser. Your national federation typically sets qualification requirements that you'd need to meet. So, if you have the ambition to race a championship: contact your national federation to ask about the requirements.

Side note: in triathlon, you always race within your own age category. This is called your Age Group. This

means it's possible to become a World Champion or National Champion within your own Age Group. So, you don't even need to be a pro athlete, to become the best in the world. Seventy years old and still on the podium? It's possible!

Clubs and Coaching

Triathlon is an individual sport. Besides some team races, you train and race alone. Luckily, nowadays almost every big city has their own triathlon club. You have all kinds of clubs: big clubs with hundreds of members, but also small ones. They all have one thing in common: you meet other triathlon fanatics, you get to ask them questions, and you get to ask advice from coaches.

Of course, it's nice to swim, bike and run with others every now and then. And the expertise of a coach is priceless. It can help you find balance and a good build up in your training. Not only will a coach help you balance your swim, bike and run workouts, they'll also help you find a way of combining the sport, with work and a family life.

Overtraining is a risk for triathletes, some guidance can help you recognise it soon enough to switch things up. Besides the coaching that you make use of at your local triathlon club, you can also get coaching from a triathlon-specific coaching company. You'll receive a customised training program, that tells you what exactly you need to train every week. Many professional triathletes guide other beginner athletes like that. This way they can transfer their knowledge to others, while the beginner athlete gets a unique chance to get to know a pro athlete a bit better.



YOUR GEAR
WHAT EQUIPMENT DO
YOU NEED?

As a triathlete, you need a lot of equipment. We created an overview of the things you need for each discipline. There is a short explanation, that will help you decide whether you really require that specific item.



SWIMMING

- **Swim shorts, bathing suit** for indoor training.

- **Swim cap** you usually receive these from an organisation when you join a race.

- **Wetsuit** this will make your outdoor swims much more enjoyable. It will keep you warm and help you float better. For some races a wetsuit will be required (when the water is too cold). There are wetsuits with long sleeves and short sleeves. If there is more fabric, you will not only stay warmer but also float better.

- **Trisuit** underneath your wetsuit, you wear a trisuit. After taking off your wetsuit, you can keep your trisuit on during the bike and run. This way you don't have to change your clothes.

- **Skinsuit** You don't like swimming in a wetsuit or it is not allowed because of the high water temperatures? A skin suit could provide you with some extra buoyancy. However, when the water temperature is too low during races, it's not allowed to swim only in a skin suit. You'll still need a wetsuit then.

- **Sports watch** Helps you track the distance you swam, ran or biked. It also tracks the speed and lap times.

- **Swimming goggles** especially when you learn to swim freestyle, these are essential. For swimming outside, it's recommended to get mirror glasses with a coating: this will help with sighting as it keeps the sunlight out of your eyes.



- **Float board** used to float for when you specifically want to train your legs; referred to as kicks.



- **Pull buoy** a foam 'marshmallow' that you put in between your legs. This helps you float up higher in the water with your legs and hips, which means you don't need to involve your legs as much. This is handy for when you're focusing on your arms and technique.



- **Paddles** You use these during swim training to work on your strength and feeling for the water.





CYCLING

- TRIATHLON BIKE / RACE BIKE When racing a triathlon, you'll have a big advantage when you ride a race bike or even a triathlon (time trial) bike. Due to the aerodynamic lines and small tires, you'll be able to move through the wind more efficiently. That means you move faster, while putting in the same effort.

- AERO BARS Triathlon bikes are always equipped with aero bars, but that's not the case for race bikes. On the latter, you could still mount even when riding a road bike. Aero bars help you to ride more comfortable, which could help you save energy for the run. Not all races allow aero bars. At draft legal races - where athletes can ride right behind each other, instead of keeping their distance, like in Middle and Long Distances - it's often not allowed to use aero bars, or you're limited to a certain length.



- SPECIAL SEAT POST When you mount aero bars you usually – depending on your body – need to have a special seat post, which allows you to move your saddle further forward. By moving your saddle forward, you position yourself right above your bottom bracket, which makes it easier to transfer your strength onto the paddles. Also, you move closer to the aero bars, which allows your shoulders and neck to relax a bit more.

- HELMET An absolute essential is a good and safe helmet. You're always required to wear a helmet when racing, but also in training it's highly recommended to use a helmet. Make sure your helmet is tight and that it fits your head well. Some helmets are equipped with a visor, then you won't need separate glasses anymore.



- CYCLING GLASSES Your helmet doesn't come with a visor? Then it's handy to get yourself some cycling glasses. Of course, to protect your eyes from the sun, but also to keep insects out of your eyes. It might also help to keep sweat out of your eyes.

- **SHOES** Most likely your triathlon bike or race bike is equipped with cleats. This means you'll need special cycling shoes. These shoes click into the pedals and by turning your foot a quarter, you can take your feet off the pedal again. It's important to first practice this in a safe place. When you have your feet attached to the paddles, you can better transfer your strength onto the paddles. That's mostly because it allows you to pull the paddle back up.

- **CYCLING JERSEY AND BIB** While a race suit is best to wear during events, during training triathletes generally wear a 'normal' cycling jersey and bib. The bib will usually have a thicker chamois, which is important for long rides. As a rule of thumb, it's recommended to go for a jersey and bib that fit tightly, because then you won't be bothered by the material fluttering in the wind.

- **BIKE COMPUTER** Monitoring your data during a ride? Of course, you could use a sports watch, but a bike computer is just slightly more convenient. There are basic bike computers that provide you with data like your speed, time and distance, but there are also more luxurious bike computers that allow you to follow a certain route by using maps.



- **INNER TUBES / PUMP** When you go out to ride your bike, make sure to always carry some extra inner tubes and a little pump with you in case you get a flat. You could also use a CO2 cartridge – which is easier to put in the back pocket of your jersey – to get air into the tire.

- **POWER METER** In addition to your bike computer, you could also upgrade your bike with a power meter. This will give you an insight in the watts that you push, and thus how much power you have.



RUNNING

- **RUNNING SHOES** Obviously, the most important thing you need for that final discipline. Find shoes that suit your running style. A running shop can help you with that. With the right shoes you avoid fatigue, warmth and irritated feet, but also injuries.

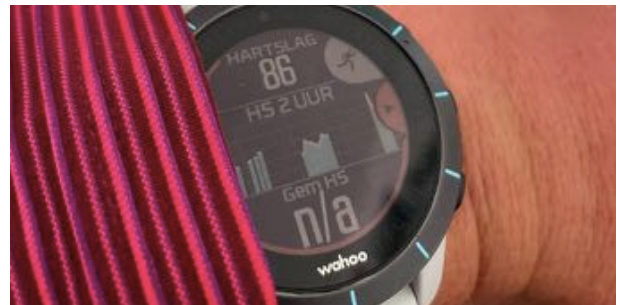
- **TRIATHLON SHOES** Triathlon shoes are usually better ventilated, and they are waterproof, which is handy when you come off the bike wet, or for when you throw water on yourself during the run. These shoes don't have normal laces, but elastic ones. This will help you get through transition faster. Especially during short-distance races, this is helpful.

- **RUN APPAREL** Just like with cycling, for the running it's also best to wear a trisuit, so that you don't need to change clothes during a race. During training, you'd better use normal running apparel of course, as running in a trisuit is slightly less comfortable due to the chamois. Get yourself airy and breathable clothing, which is still warm enough to use during the winter. Most people prefer tight clothes as it doesn't move around your body so much while running.

- **CAP** Not only helpful to keep hair out of your face, but also nice to provide some shade. If you keep your cap wet on hot days, it can help regulating your body temperature.

- **GLASSES** Ideal to keep the sun out of your eyes. If you don't use a visor on the bike, you can use your cycling glasses for the run.

- **SPORTS WATCH** Whereas you monitor your cycling data with a bike computer, on the run a sports watch can be useful. Check which model works best for you, depending on your specific needs and wants. There are many kinds of sports watches available; basic ones, that just show you your speed, but also high-end models that measure your stride length, frequency, and heart rate.



GENERAL

- **RACE NUMBER BELT** By wearing a race number belt, you don't need to pin your start number on your clothing during a race. That's handy during triathlons, as you can wear your race number under your wetsuit for the swim, during the bike part you're required to wear it on your back, and during the run you must move it to your belly. With a race number belt, that's easy.

- **TIMING CHIP STRAP** You usually receive these from the race organization. You wear it around your left ankle. The chip, which registers your time, is attached to it. It's always on your left ankle, so that it can't get stuck in your bike chain.

- **NUTRITION** During a race, you're generally handed nutrition from the organisation. They do this at so-called aid stations along the bike and run course. An organisation tells you before an event what brand they're going to use. Still, athletes often prefer to make use of their own nutrition. If you decide to use the nutrition provided by the organisation, it's important that you start training with it so you know how your body reacts to it. If it doesn't work for you, you can try to organise your own nutrition. Usually it's not allowed for spectators to hand you gels or bottles; so you'll need to bring everything yourself.



***EVERYTHING YOU
MIGHT WANT TO
KNOW ABOUT
YOUR FIRST RACE***

Costs for your first entry, hotel stays and practical information. Everything you need to know for your very first triathlon.

YOUR FIRST RACE

How Much Does Triathlon Cost?

Let's be clear: triathlon isn't a cheap sport. As you could have just seen, there is plenty of equipment you need to get started. The biggest investment is a race- or triathlon bike, secondly, wetsuits can be pricey. Still, it's also just a matter of how much you want to spend. There are bikes with a price of 15,000 euros, but also bikes that cost you less than 1000 euros. We would recommend to first figure out whether you really like the sport, before you buy the expensive things on the list.

The positive thing is, that most things will last for years. So it may cost a lot at first, but you're guaranteed years of triathlon fun.

Of course, you also pay to register for an event. Every organisation asks a certain registration fee. This is dependent on the distance you cover: the average Long Distance will be more expensive than the average Middle Distance, and Sprint- or Olympic Distances can be much cheaper. The prices vary depending on the location, distance, and organization. So check per race how much you need to pay to participate.

To give an idea of prices for a Long Distance, we can say that it usually starts at a price of 200 euros. For Challenge Family that price is around 350-450 euros, while for Ironman the price could be higher. An average Sprint Triathlon costs between 20 and 50 euros, and a Middle Distance would range around 150 to 300 euros.

How to Find a Good Event?

With thousands of races around the world – local, national and international events – it's important that you ask yourself a few questions. What kind of course do you want? Do you prefer a flat bike course, or do you prefer to climb? Do you like big

races with many participants, or do you prefer a small local event? Do you want to race at home, or would you like to travel for a race?

The most popular races you'll find with Challenge Family and Ironman. These two brands organise leading, big and often historic races everywhere around the world. At these events, you can generally expect an eye for detail, and they are considered to deliver an 'experience'.

At the websites of Challenge Family and Ironman you can find their race calendars. Make sure to check the calendars of these brands, so that you have a good idea of where and when they organise races.

Additionally, you could check Triathlon Today. On a daily basis, Triathlon Today provides you with the latest triathlon news, race announcements, and race reports.

- www.challenge-family.com/races/
- www.ironman.com
- www.tri-today.com



Where Do You Stay Before a Race?

If you decided to race a local event near your home, it's easiest to just sleep at home. Nothing beats your own bed. But, if you're racing further away from home or even across the border, it's nice to book a hotel, apartment, or Airbnb near the race venue.

It's most convenient to find a location close to the swim start, so that you don't need to travel far on race morning. Note: the swim start is not necessarily at the same location as the finish, so keep that in mind for when you need to return to your accommodation after the event. Logistically, it can require some planning.

At the bigger events – often the Middle and Long Distance – you can collect your start number the day before a race, or sometimes even two days before the event. You also rack your bike in the transition area on the day before a race. That means it's handy to arrive at a race venue a few days prior to the event. This way you can get used to the weather and/or time difference, check out the course, and it will leave you with plenty of time to go through all these practical things. It will save you a lot of stress.



The bigger event organisers, usually have partnerships with hotels around them. You'll typically receive such promotions – that can save you some money – in your mail, or you can find them through the race website and social media.

Racing Abroad: How Do I Transport My Bike?

Although you can also rent a bike at the location of your race, it's nicest to ride your own bike. Fortunately, there are many ways to transport your bike safely.

If you go with the car, of course, it's easiest to just use a bike rack. Or, if you have a big enough car, your bike will probably also fit in the back, if you put a seat down and take a wheel off.

When traveling by plane it's a bit more hassle, but still there are many options. You could buy a bike case, or rent one. You can fit your bike – when it's disassembled – into these cases. There are hard cases for this – for these you take the seat post out, the wheels, and you need to disassemble your pedals – and there are soft cases; for the latter you are only required to take the wheels and seat post out. Just make sure to check with your airline whether they allow bikes. Nearly all airlines do, but there are exceptions. It's also recommended to register your bike a few days or even weeks before a flight, so that you're sure that there is enough space for it. Usually you pay a bit extra to bring your bike, but some airlines may allow you to swap another checked-in item for a bike without charging extra.

Additionally, some event organisers provide package deals, that will do the shipping for you. As an example: Challenge Family works with Ship To Cycle. If you make use of this paid service, you can send your bike from your home country, and they will make sure it's delivered to your race location. After the race, your bike will be brought back home for you.

COURSES

Can I Do a Course Familiarisation?

Before a race, it's good to explore the course that you will be racing on. Preferably, you do this by swimming, biking or running (a part of) the course. There are different options.

The bigger organisations often organise a course familiarisation. Then you go onto the swim-, bike- or run course with a group of people to see where you need to pay attention. This is usually a few days before a race, but it can also be a few months before an event.

Also, many organisations provide GPS files of their courses. You can download these from their website, and that way you can explore the course on your own. Of course, you'll need to comply with all the traffic rules. If you're racing on a public highway, you cannot recce the road outside the race. Always make sure to look after your own – and others' – safety.

When you're out on a race course, whether it's before or during a race, always adhere to the organisation's regulations.

Distances

We mentioned it before, but there are many distances in the world of triathlon.

Long Distance: The Long Distance, also referred to as a Full Distance, is the most traditional distance. Athletes swim 3.8 km, bike 180 km and run 42.2 km. The fastest athletes in the world will need about 7:30 hours to complete this distance, while the last finishers usually need about 17 hours. There is no such thing as an

Iron-distance. By saying that, people may refer to a LongDistance, but these are organized by Ironman, as well as Challenge Family or other organisations.

O3: This distance is not so common, but you see it at the World Triathlon Championships. Athletes swim 3 km, bike 120 km and run 30 km.

Middle Distance: Half of a Long Distance: 1.9 km of swimming, 90 km of biking and 21.1 km of running. This is by far the most popular distance among triathletes. It's often considered a step towards the Long Distance.

Olympic Distance / Standard Distance:

Looking at professional triathlon, this would be the most spectacular distance. That's because the distance became Olympic in 2000. After 1.5 km of swimming, athletes bike 40 km and run 10 km. As athletes get to draft (bike right behind another competitor) on this distance, the race is typically decided on the run.

Sprint Distance / Standard Distance: 750 meters of swimming, 20 km of cycling and 5 km of running. The ideal distance for the beginner athlete to get a taste of the sport, but also experienced athletes like to go full gas on the short distance.

Kids Triathlon: Junior Challenges are there in all shapes and sizes. Depending on their age, kids generally don't exceed a distance of 400 meters of swimming, 10 km of cycling and 4 km of running.

Ultra Triathlons: For extreme athletes that don't even consider a Long Distance long enough. Everything longer than a Long Distance would qualify as an Ultra Triathlon. There are examples of athletes that, although we're not talking about a race, cover a distance of 200 km or swimming, 20,000 km of cycling and 5000 km of running. Of course, we talk about a journey that takes several months in that case.

How to Combine Different Training Sessions?

You feel tired after your swim, you want nothing other than rest once you get off the bike, and after a run your battery levels are low. How are you ever going to train for a triathlon, in which you'll need to do all these three disciplines consecutively?

Good thing: it's definitely not necessary to plan all your training sessions right after each other. Actually, you rarely ever do that. It's important to recover in between and feel fresh when you start your next session. That way, you make the most of each workout.

With that being said: you'll soon notice that after swimming, cycling isn't much of a problem. You use different muscles, so swimming won't easily keep you from cycling a good session. The transition from cycling to running, on the other hand, puts more strain on your body. You'll likely feel weak during the first few km of your run, but stay positive: after a few kilometres, that will probably fade away.

That means that the combination of cycling and running – which you'll also do in that order during a race – is practiced more than other combinations. Athletes might for instance cycle for two hours or longer and then, directly after cycling, do a short run. By running three or four kilometres after your ride, you get in the worst kilometres without acidifying. You will still get used to that uncomfortable feeling you get during a race, though. Your pace doesn't need to be so fast during these runs.

It's also smart – and fun – to plan your training session in a different order than in a race. Some days you could start with the run, and hop on the bike – not straight – after that. Other days, you may want to start with a swim and follow it up with a long endurance ride. You'll notice that your

muscles are stimulated in another way, and that's not always easy, but it does help you prepare for the challenges you face during a triathlon.

The most important tip is to make sure you enjoy your training. You may want to decide to work with a coach, but make sure you don't become a "slave" to the programme. Listen to your body. Rest when you need to, and don't be afraid to skip a training when your body asks for it.

Besides your swim-, bike- and run training, it's also good to do some strength exercises. You could for instance work on your core stability. This will increase your stability during sports, and it will help prevent injuries. It may not be your favorite type of training, but it can definitely be valuable.



VOLUNTEER

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TRIATHLON GLOSSARY

What Do These Words Mean?

When you first enter the world of triathlon, you'll likely stumble across some terms that make no sense to you.

You'll find a list with a few of these terms below:

Aero Aero means you're aerodynamic, meaning you're moving forward efficiently.

Aero Bars handlebars that you can use to "lie" down.

Age Groupers Amateurs racing within their own Age Group. Depending on your age, you are assigned to a certain Age Group. Within this Age Group, you could win a race.

Beach Start A race where the swim starts from the beach. Athletes will be lined up at the shore and run into the water as soon as they hear the gun go off.

Brick Sessions A big training session with more than one discipline. This could be a two-hour ride, followed up (straight away) by a thirty-minute run.

Dive Start A race with a Dive Start, starts from a patoon. Athletes will be lined up on the patoon and dive into the water as they hear the gun go off.

Dolphin Dives A technique that athletes use – in a race – when entering the water from the shore. You'll dive through the waves like a dolphin to escape the swell.

Drafting Athletes cycling right behind each other. When the front wheel of one athlete nearly touches the rear wheel of the person riding in front, they are drafting. At some short-distance races, drafting is legal, but at long-distance races it's prohibited. Organisations always let you know beforehand whether it's allowed. Athletes typically need to keep 12 metres of distance between them (front wheel to front wheel). However, in recent years, Challenge Family has started to adopt a 12 metre and even a 20 metre rule. While drafting, athletes are taking advantage of other athletes, because of facing less wind during the ride.

Draft Legal / No-drafting Race At draft legal races you're allowed to ride close to other athletes, at no-drafting races this could lead to a penalty or even disqualification.

FTP Your Functional Threshold Power equals the highest average wattage that you're able to push when cycling for one hour. Through an FTP test – which you can do on your own, but even better with a coach – you will find your training zones on the bike, which helps you to train more specifically.

LD - Long Distance (3.8 kilometres of swimming - 180 kilometres of cycling - 42.2 kilometres of running)

MD - Middle Distance (1.9 kilometres of swimming - 90 kilometres of cycling - 21.1 kilometres of running)

Negative split If you run a negative split, you run the second part of your run faster than the first part. Especially elite athletes sometimes win races by using this "style".

OD - Olympic Distance (1.5 kilometres of swimming - 40 kilometres of cycling - 10 kilometres of running)

Penalty During a race, a referee can give you a penalty if you don't comply with the rules of an organisation. All unsportsmanlike behavior could lead to a penalty. This could be a time penalty, where an athlete needs to stand on the side of the road for two or five minutes. Or it could be immediate disqualification.

Parc Fermee / Transition Area In the transition area (sometimes abbreviated to TA) you change from either swimming to cycling, or from cycling to running. This is where you have all your equipment for the next discipline. You can also get changed in the transition area.

Rookie A rookie is a beginner triathlete. There are various "Rookie Races" around the world, targeting these beginner athletes and aiming to make triathlon more accessible.

Shifters The shifters are two levers that you use to change gears. Nowadays, more expensive bikes shift electronically: you only need to push a button and the gears will change.

Watts To get an idea of the strength you press onto the pedals, athletes usually look at the amount of watts they push, which can be measured with certain gadgets. Because conditions always change when riding outdoors, watts is a more reliable way to measure performance.



CHECKLIST

PRE-RACE

- LICENCE / PROOF OF IDENTITY
- PARTICIPANT INFORMATION & ENTRY CONFIRMATION
- ADDRESS & DIRECTIONS
- TOILET PAPER
- SAFETY PINS
- TRANSITION BAGS
- CHARGER/POWERBANK
- FIRST AID KIT (FIRST AID ITEMS)
- ANY MEDICATION (HAY FEVER / ASTHMA)
- SUNSCREEN (WATERPROOF)
- RACE BELT (+BIB NUMBER)
- MONEY
- VASELINE
- SPORTS WATCH / HEART RATE MONITOR
- PRE-RACE NUTRITION

SWIM

- WETSUIT
- TRISUIT (OR SWIMMING TRUNKS/ BATHING SUIT)
- SWIMMING GOGGLES
- SWIMMING CAP (ORGANISATION)
- TIMING CHIP & STRAP
- TOWEL
- SPORTS WATCH / HEART RATE MONITOR
- FLIP FLOPS OR OLD SHOES
- EAR & NOSE PLUGS

BIKE

- BIKE
- HELMET
- CYCLING SHOES
- SOCKS
- DRINK BOTTLE(S)
- BICYCLE PUMP / CARTRIDGES
- SPARE INNER TUBE/TUBE (2)
- SET OF TIRE LEVERS
- TIRE REPAIR KIT
- BIKE COMPUTER
- SPORTS- OR SUNGLASSES
- MONEY
- IF NO TRISUIT: CYCLING SHORTS, CYCLING SHIRT
- CYCLING GLOVES
- WIND/RAIN JACKET
- ARM WARMERS
- RACE BELT WITH BIB NUMBER
- NUTRITION

RUN

- RUNNING SHOES
- IF NO TRISUIT: RUNNING SHORTS & SHIRT
- SOCKS
- CAP/SWEATBAND/BEANIE
- JACKET
- DEPENDING ON THE WEATHER: LONG CLOTHES
- NUTRITION

AFTER RACE

- SWEATPANTS
- T-SHIRT OR SWEATER
- DRY SOCKS
- DRY SHOES
- TOWELS
- SHAMPOO
- RECOVERY NUTRITION

RULES

There are a lot of rules within the sport of triathlon that are monitored before, during and after races by assigned referees. Rules are made by organisers, federations and organisations such as World Triathlon. The rules can therefore differ per race. As a guideline, we suggest you refer you to this file from World Triathlon, which gives an extensive and good overview of the most common rules.

https://www.triathlon.org/uploads/docs/World_Triathlon_Competition_Rules_2022_20220128.pdf







Enjoy Triathlon,
#SeeYouAtTheFinishLine!