

RACE WEEK CHECKLIST

IMPORTANT TERMS:

Aid stations - tables set up along the course with volunteers to hand you water and other sports drinks. The volunteers will hand you a cup as you pass by - make sure to ask whether it is water or Gatorade so you don't get any surprises! They will usually have both available.

Race bib - Also known as your race number. This is a piece of paper that you'll pin onto your shirt, to identify you during the race and in photos.

Race director - The person ultimately responsible for the execution of the event. He or she makes sure the roads are blocked off, race bibs are ordered, porta-potties are on site, and everything in between.

Race packet - Contains your race bib, timing chip, may include a course map and other instructions, usually also has a bunch of coupons and random stuff from sponsors. You'll usually have to pick up your race shirt at a separate table, after you pick up your packet.

Timing chip - A device that attaches to the back of your race number. It detects the exact time you cross the start and finish mats to determine your chip time (see definition below). Unless you're at the very front of the pack, it will take you anywhere from a few seconds to several minutes to get over the starting mat after the starting gun is fired. If you have a timing chip, this period of time is not counted against you. Unless the race you're running is small, or informal, it's likely that you'll have a timing chip provided to you in your race packet.

Clock time - the time elapsed between when the starting gun is fired, and when you cross the finish line.

Chip time - the time elapsed between when you cross the starting mat and the finish line (usually shorter than clock time).

Race Expo - If you're doing a 5K that's part of a larger event such as a marathon, you might pick up your packet at the Expo. This is just another way of saying 'huge sports fair' and it's a chance for vendors to set up booths and try to sell you stuff. You can often get really good deals on discontinued gear, or try new nutrition bars and drinks for free. Just make sure you don't get so distracted by all the fun stuff that you forget to grab your race packet!

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REVIEW THE RACE RULES (use this page to take notes):

Weather policy - what happens if the race is cancelled due to rain?

Where are the starting and finish lines?

Where can your family and friends cheer you on?

What time do you need to be there?

Are headphones allowed on the race course?

Where and when you can pick up your race bib and t-shirt?

What information do you need to bring with you when you pick up your packet?

Can someone else pick it up for you if you're not available?

Where is race parking, and do you need to have cash on hand to pay for it?

Will there be any road closures, and does this affect the route you'll be driving to get to the race?

Where are the aid stations?

Will you have a timing chip, and will you need to return it after the race?

Other reminders for race day:

If you don't find answers to your questions, email the race director and post the question on the race's Facebook page.

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GENERAL TIPS:

- Don't throw out the pins that come with your race packet - they are for your bib and you will need them.
- Plan to arrive early enough for at least two last minute port-a-potty visits.
- You will almost always get a race shirt. You may or may not get a finisher's medal for a 5K.
- Pack your stuff and lay out your outfit the night before so the next morning you can just get up, get dressed, eat your breakfast and go.
- If you're picking up your bib at a race expo, make sure you leave enough time to shop and browse.

THE NIGHT BEFORE

- Lay out your clothes and gear—including timing chip, bib, safety pins, shoes, tights, top, jacket, gloves, socks, undies, sports bra and hat or a headband. Often your timing chip is attached to the back of your bib.
- Prepare a go-bag with lip balm, bobby pins, extra ponytail holder, Bodyglide, contact lens solution, water bottle, snack, sunscreen, extra socks, headphones. Every possible thing you think you might need. You can leave it in the car at the last minute, but in the event you need something, you can send someone back to the parking lot to grab it.
- Pin your race bib on your shirt, and attach your timing chip if necessary.
- Figure out exactly when you need to leave to get there on time.
- Set your alarm.
- Make sure your morning meal is ready to go.
- Make sure your phone and other devices are charging.
- Make sure you know how you're going to carry ID: will it be in a pocket, waist pack or armband? It always helps to stick a credit card and/or a \$20 bill in with your ID in case of an emergency.
- Check the weather one last time.
- Check the race website and your email for any last-minute race announcements.
- Text your racing buddies to make sure you know where you're going to meet.
- Confirm with family and friends where to meet you after the race.
- HAVE FUN!