

# MID-OHIO TRACK TALK FOR BEGINNERS`

Our goal today will be to cover what a new participant will need to know and do to help insure they will have a great weekend at the Mid-Ohio race track, then talk a little about driving the course.

The first thing to remember is that this is a driver's education event, not a race school. We will be there to teach the mechanical principles and driving techniques to allow you to better understand your car's capabilities and drive it closer to its limits and your own. The only award you will get is the smile on your face when you pack-up and go home on Sunday. Be warned, DE's are one of life's rare enjoyable experiences that are not illegal, immoral or fattening but highly addictive.

## Getting started - some frequently asked questions:

- Are non-Porsches allowed? Yes, our region allows non-Porsches, not all regions do.
- Are open topped cars allowed? Yes, but they must pass the broomstick test. That is when you are seated in the car with helmet on, a broomstick resting on the windshield frame and the roll bar must clear your helmet. 997 and 987's with pop-up roll bars generally meet this requirement.
- Do I need special brake pads, track tires, helmet, etc.? No, but it won't be long before you will start to consider getting them. We do have loaner helmets for beginners. However, since we only have a limited number, having your own is highly recommended. Note: all helmets must have a Snell SA or M 2005 or 2010 safety rating.
- What kind of instruction will I receive? Both classroom and on-track with an experienced instructor.

## Pre-event preparation:

Your car must be safety inspected using the tech inspection form as a guide. Do not wait until the last minute since you might have to address fixing a problem detected during the inspection. If your car is a Porsche, Porsche of the Village will do this free of charge. Please take the tech form with you.

Before you leave home, clean out your car to remove anything that you will not need at the track.

## What will you need to bring with you?

- Your driver's license
- Helmet, unless using a loaner
- Completed tech inspection form
- Maps or directions to the motel and track
- Window cleaner and paper towels
- Tire pressure gage
- Duct tape
- Spare oil
- Plastic bags and a tarp unless renting a garage
- Rain gear and umbrella
- Cold weather gear including long johns and gloves
- Appropriate clothing for driving. Cotton, long-sleeved shirt and long pants. Tennis shoes or driving shoes.
- Folding chair

- Drinking water

### What must be done Friday evening?

- You are strongly encouraged to stay at the headquarters motel, the Quality Inn, Belleville, or one in the vicinity Friday evening.
- Try to arrive at the headquarters motel, the Quality Inn, Belleville, between 4:30pm and 6:00pm for tech and registration. Tech formally begins at **5:00pm**.
- Typically we will have a meet and greet pizza party at registration. This will be a chance to meet your instructor.
- After check-in at the motel, remove your personal items from the car and get it in line to have it and your helmet checked and your tech form signed-off.
- Then proceed to registration with your driver's license and signed-off tech form.
- Complete registration and put the ID bracelet on your left wrist signifying you have signed the club's waver. If you have guests, they must also sign the waver and get ID bracelets.
- Read the material supplied in your packet including the weekend schedule. Ask any questions that you might have now, not in the morning.
- If possible locate your instructor and introduce yourself.
- Put your car numbers and run group identification on the top center of your windshield.
- Fill your gas tank and check the air pressure in your tires.
- Be sure to set your alarm to allow plenty of time to get breakfast, pack up and get to the track by **6:45am-7:15am**. Note: there is often a waiting line to get in as everyone must also sign the track's waver. Mid-Ohio typically supplies their own wrist band so that you do not need to sign their waver on future re-entry during the weekend.

### Saturday morning:

- If you are not familiar with how to get to the track, ask to follow someone who is. Note: watch your speed when going thru Lexington and on Steam Corners Road.
- Allow 30 min. drive time to get from the Quality Inn to the track plus another 30 to park, unload and get organized.
- After entering the track and signing the track's and club's wavers and getting the track's wrist band, proceed to the paddock.
- Find a suitable place to park and unload your car of everything that is not bolted down. Remove cell phones, radar detectors, floor mats, etc. Empty the glove box and all storage compartments, check under the seats for loose items.
- **If you were unable to get to tech and registration Friday evening you must unload your car and proceed to garage #7 for tech and registration.**
- Check your schedule and get to the general driver's meeting on time, typically this is at **7:45am** in the Goodyear building. Also note that the first novice classroom is at **8:45am** in the same place. **These meetings are not optional.**
- Recheck tire pressures.
- Approximately 10 minutes before your run group is scheduled to go on-track, line up your car facing east along the fence on the north side of the garages (this will be reviewed in the drivers meeting).
- Move your car to the hot pit area when instructed. Show the pit marshal your wrist band when entering the pit area. Stay to the right and do not leave a large gap between cars.
- Wait for your instructor. If he doesn't show up after a few minutes get the attention of an official so that the issue can be addressed. **Do not** go out onto the track without an instructor.

- Both your driver's side and passenger side windows must be all the way down even if it is raining.
- Before entering the track make sure that your helmet is fastened and that you are properly seated with your seat belt secured. See exception below for the group D (novices) first session.
- **For group D's first session**, no helmets will be used. Your instructor will drive your car for the first two laps pointing out the flag stations, braking zones, turn-in, apex and track-out cones, the passing zones and the "line" around the track, and demonstrate threshold breaking on the front straight.
  - After the second lap your instructor will exit the track and enter the pits where you will exchange seats. Make sure that you adjust your seat if necessary and fasten your seat belt. Now it is your turn to drive.
  - Do not exceed 65 mph during this session!
- When entering the track, always stay to the left until entering turn two.
- Be aware of the flag stations and know what the flags signify.
  - **Red** - A serious problem has occurred and you must pull off-line to the side of the track and stop within sight of a flag station. Check your mirror to be sure that the car behind you has seen the flag and is also slowing down. Remain in your car and wait for instructions from the flag marshal.
  - **Black** - This is the signal to pull into the pits. If the flag is pointed at you, there is something wrong with your car or your driving. If shown to everyone this means that the run group is being stopped to address a problem on the track. Don't forget to give the pit-in signal.
  - **Yellow** - If standing, slow down a bit and be aware that there is a problem ahead requiring caution. No passing is allowed. If the flag is being waved there is a problem in the immediate vicinity. Proceed with caution. No passing is allowed.
  - **Yellow with red stripes** - This is the slippery flag and indicates that a hazardous condition exists on the track. It could be water, oil, dirt, a car part, and etc. Drive with caution.
  - **Blue with yellow stripe** - A faster car is behind you. Check your mirrors and allow them to pass at the next opportunity by giving the appropriate signal.
  - **Checkered** - This is the end of the session. Slow down and allow you brakes to cool down. Pit at the next opportunity.
- Listen to and obey your instructor. Remember one of your goals is to have fun. The following are some helpful hints for achieving this:
  - Smoothness is the key. Do not try to impress your instructor with your car control skills or your cars power.
  - Leave your ego in the paddock. See what you can learn from your instructor.
  - Learn the best line through each corner then work on carrying more speed.
  - Check your mirrors when approaching a passing zone to see if someone is close behind you. Signal to let faster cars pass when you are in a passing zone. If they caught up with you in the turns do not try to race them down the straight! Slow down and let them pass.
  - If you want to pass a slower car in front of you, stay behind them so that they can see you in their mirrors. Do not move out into their blind spot. Do not tailgate.
  - Just because you get a passing signal does not mean that you have to make the pass. It is your decision. Feel free to wave it off.
  - If at any time your brake pedal starts to feel soft when on the track, inform your instructor and come into the pits. Better to lose a few laps than to lose your brakes at the end of the back straight.
  - When you get the checkered flag slow down and try to use your brakes as little as possible. This is your cool down lap.

- Signal and stay to the left when approaching the pit entrance and give the pit-in signal.
- If your instructor does not have another student waiting, proceed back to your parking area so that you and your instructor can debrief the run.
- If your instructor has a student waiting pull to the left side of the pits and let him out. Try to set up a time and place for discussing the run.
- After each run:
  - Check your tire pressure and adjust to the desired hot pressure. This will usually be close to the rated maximum pressure for the tire or as specifically recommended by the tire mfg. If in doubt ask your instructor for his advice.
  - Check for tire condition.
  - Check oil level and temperature. Get in the habit of checking oil temperature and pressure when on the track. The same goes for coolant temperature if water cooled.
  - Check fuel level. You will be amazed at how fast you can empty a gas tank driving the track.
  - If you did not start with virtually new brake pads, check them periodically to be sure they are not getting too thin (under 1/8 in.)
  - If your brakes started to get soft when on the track, now is the time to bleed them. If you are not equipped to do this you can usually find someone who can assist you.
  - If it is a hot day, be sure to keep hydrated. If sunny, use sunscreen.
  - Most of us leave the keys in the car while away. You never know when someone might need to close a window in the event of a spring rain shower.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask either your instructor or an event official. We are all there to help make this a great, fun weekend.

Gary Nichols  
Spring DE Event Chair

Dennis Okin  
Fall DE Event Chair, Registrar

Dale Timmester  
Chief Instructor

Jerry Wolf  
Chief Instructor

Safety Chair  
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