

VELOTHON CYCLESMART

TOP 10 CHECKLIST

Completing a road cycling event requires training on a bike. To be fully prepared, it's important that you arrive to your training or on the event day healthy, fit, and equipped with the proper gear. Fitness can be built indoors, but competing with a group requires the ability to ride safely and competently outdoors. Read on for an essential checklist to get you ready for any two-wheeled challenge.

BEFORE YOU RIDE

1 IT STARTS WITH YOUR BIKE

- Your seat and handlebars should be adjusted to the appropriate height and reach for you. Work with a fitter to find your optimal bike fit.
- Ensure all bolts are tightened properly to avoid coming loose during the ride, and that your brakes and gears are working properly.
- Keep your bike clean and your chain lubed.
- Use front and rear lights when riding in low light conditions — this may be required by law in your area.
- Tires should be inflated to the recommended pressure.

2 LEARN THE BASICS

- Practice clipping in and out of your pedals, as well as starting, stopping, and emergency braking.
- If you're unfamiliar with shifting gears, practice doing this in a low-traffic area.
- Practice riding a straight line, and cornering (right, left, U-turns).

3 SUIT UP

- Always wear an approved helmet in training and racing. Helmets should fit properly without moving around on your head while riding, and remain buckled at all times during your ride.
- Wear clothing that is designed to function in the weather you will encounter on the ride, and that will help maintain your core body temperature when riding in cold or wet conditions, even during a race.
- Choose clothing that is visible in low-light conditions.

4 BE PREPARED TO RIDE

- Carry the appropriate amount of water and nutrition, along with a way to purchase additional supplies if needed.
- Know how to use a tire repair kit and appropriate tools, and be sure to carry them with you.

5 PLAN AHEAD

- Select a route that limits the number interactions with vehicles — if possible factor in time of day and day of the week.
- Always obey all traffic signals and signs.
- Where available, ride in dedicated bike lanes and where other bikes are normally present to ensure vehicles are aware of you.
- Select a ride distance appropriate to your fitness.

6 INFORM OTHERS

- In the event of an incident, someone should know where you are riding.
- Always carry personal identification with you and emergency contact information.
- Carry a cell phone for emergencies.

DURING THE RACE

7 STAY ALERT

- Leave the playlists and podcasts for indoor workouts.
- Don't use your phone while riding — pull off the road if you need to make a call or send a text.
- Don't take photos and selfies while riding.
- Keep your head up, particularly when riding in a group. Look at the road and the riders around you, not your bike computer.
- Be able to see and hear what is going on around you. When riding do not look down at the road, look ahead.
- When riding in a group, do not get fixated on the rider directly in front of you. Look through so you can anticipate any issues before they happen, and have an exit strategy.
- Be easy on the brakes when riding in a group. Ride smoothly, do not overlap wheels, and always come up the inside line of a peloton.
- Pay particular attention when approaching aid stations during a race.

8 OBEY THE LAW

- Always stop at stop signs and lights — remember, cyclists have the same responsibilities as vehicles.
- Know the traffic laws for your area, especially those regarding riding two abreast or single file.
- Know where the vehicles are around you and anticipate that drivers may not see cyclists.
- When passing a parked car or another cyclist, make sure there is enough space to avoid contact.

9 COMMUNICATE

- Use verbal and hand signals so others know if you are stopping or turning.
- Make eye contact with drivers and other cyclists.
- While riding, let other athletes know you are passing through verbal communication. Watch for hazards in the road including potholes, debris, or water bottles. Point out and verbally communicate these hazards to those riding and racing with you.
- Visually and verbally communicate with the specific volunteer in the aid station you will be taking aid from, letting them know you are taking aid directly from them.

10 SAFETY FIRST

- Ride as far to the side of the road as safely possible. Some situations do require that you safely position yourself on the road so that traffic is unable to pass. This might be when making a turn or when not safe for vehicles to pass. If riding with other people, make sure you are riding single file or allowing traffic to pass from behind you.
- Your hands should always be able to get to the brakes quickly.
- Taking unnecessary risks might gain you a couple of seconds during your ride, but it could risk you losing your life. **Always ride smart.**