

# A GUIDE TO Hosting Inclusive Bike Races & Rides



Bike races and rides are fun events the whole family can take part in. Biking is also a very inclusive sport, and with a little attention to detail, you can host a fully inclusive event for all cyclists. This guide will show you how to ensure everyone at your event is included by offering opportunity for higher participation rates. Together, we can build inclusive healthy communities.

In this guide you'll learn how to:



**Identify a Venue**



**Create a Course**



**Develop Rules &  
Regulations**



**Market your Event**



## Inclusion Tip!

**Identify an individual or individuals with a disability that can serve as a liaison.**

- Reach out to local adapted sports organizations, disability organizations, or athletes who participate in hand-cycling/para-cycling events.
- Include a person with a disability on the planning committee and include people with disabilities throughout the entire process to ensure inclusion.



# Identify a Venue



When looking for a race venue, consider the following:

## Decide What Type of Event to Host

- **Recreational** – fosters inclusion within the local community, encourages movement, often a grassroots exposure to cycling and para-cycling
- **Competitive** – often sanctioned by a governing body, could be a qualifier for high-level races, would likely attract higher level and elite athletes

## Accessible Parking

- This should be a surface that is paved and level.
- This should be close to the beginning or end of the race.
- There should also be some spaces available near registration if that is a different area.
- If this must be further away, be sure to provide an accessible shuttle.

## Accessible Bathrooms

- Provide multiple if possible.
- Identify one near the start of the race and one near the finish.
- These must be on a level surface with an accessible path.

## Accessible Athlete Check-in and Information Area

- Keep this on smooth, level ground.
- Avoid stairs, steep slopes, or obstacles – if some of these features are unavoidable, ensure an alternative route is available.
- Consider offering advance check-in/packet pick up the day before.
- For athletes with a vision impairment, consider large print forms, flyers, and signs.

## **Athlete Staging Area**

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- Provide a space near the start of the race (ideally, this would also be near the parking area) for athletes to get ready and store equipment while competing.
- Athletes will likely leave their non-biking wheelchairs or assistive mobility devices in this area while they are racing.
- Ensure this space is secure by providing staff supervision.

## **Spectator Viewing and Cheering Areas**

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- Mark off and identify a “prime viewing area” for persons with a disability and/or parents with a stroller or other mobility assistive devices.
- Often, this is in the front row of a set of bleachers; however, a ramp must be included to access this area.
- If possible, provide this space near the accessible bathrooms and/or parking area.

## **Awards, Podiums, and End of Race Celebrations**

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- Award podiums should be accessible. If a step is required, be sure to provide a ramp as well.
- Alternatives to providing a podium include:
  1. Consider a banner back-drop that each athlete would sit or stand in front of that has a graphic that lists designated 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place podiums.
  2. Consider taping off the ground in a way that shows each podium place where an athlete can sit or stand on top of.

## **Assess Lodging Options for Out-of-Town Athletes**

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As a race organizer, reach out to local hotels and establish a room block, including several accessible rooms, for the event. Talk with the hotel about the accessibility needs of the group and ways to make the experience at the hotel as seamless as possible. Suggestions to consider for hotel arrangements:

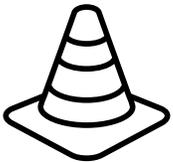
- Is breakfast included in the price?
- Would a member of the hotel staff be free to help with lowering beds in rooms, lowering shower handles, or removing bathroom doors, if needed? Note: these things are not always needed, but may be helpful for some athletes.
- Are the bathrooms big enough to allow transfers to the toilet and the shower?
- Is there enough space in the rooms for someone who uses a wheelchair to maneuver around, considering they will have their bike with them as well.
- Ask if there is a secure space in the hotel for athletes to store their equipment overnight.



# Create a Course



Consult and plan a course route that considers someone with a disability who is competing. Pay attention to significant elevation gain, dangerous or tight turns, and rough roads.

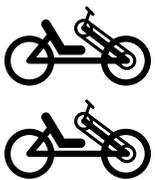


Make sure the route is secure and check with the city in which you are hosting the race to see if you need a race/event permit. Ask about blocking the roads off during the race and if there is a fee associated with this if police cars will be needed.



Ensure the course is well-marked. Consider visual markers along the route:

- Spray paint arrows on the ground at turns.
- Stake signs in the ground as mile markers and to identify turns.
- Make sure signs are easily read and in large print.
- Use high contrast colors on signs to make easier to see while cycling.
- Depending on the area, use caution tape along both sides of the course to identify the correct pathway.



Make sure the course is wide enough for two handcycles to be side by side. Having a safe space to pass is important!



Include hydration/nutrition stops along the race route.

- Ensure these are accessible with low tables and nutrition that is easy to grab/ consume.
- Make sure all hydration/nutrition stations are latex-free; this can include gloves and food selections.
- Staffing with volunteers is helpful to ensure access to all participants.



Consider accessibility at the finish line and with timing. Using an RFID (radio-frequency identification) tracking system is preferred over a corded tracking system that a hand cyclist would need to roll over at high speeds.



## Create a Course

Once the course is established, consider sharing the route before the race via GPS (global positioning system) tracking apps like Ride With GPS or STRAVA.

- Cyclists will be able to pre-ride the course if they wish.
- Cyclists will be able to see all aspects of the race ahead of time.
  - In which area of the city the race will take place
  - Elevation gain/loss
  - What the turns look like
- Cyclists will be able to load this into a bike computer and receive turn-by-turn directions during the race.
  - This would be beneficial when the peloton of racers thins out.
  - In case the marking on the course get knocked over, the cyclist would have this as a means to direct them to the correct turns on the race route.





## Create a Course

Include repair stations and vendors.

- As the promotions of the race are underway, consider reaching out to hand cycling manufacturers as well and not just bike companies.
- Often, they provide a repair station and double as a vendor.
  - If you do offer a repair station, be sure they are equipped to repair hand cycles as well.
- A benefit to the company may be selling and supporting their brand while supporting the event with a repair station.
- Cyclists can also purchase general equipment like tires and tubes, if needed.





# Rules & Regulations



## **As the race schedule is developed, consider starting the hand cycle division separately**

- Starting the hand cycle division **last** would ensure a safer experience on the course, with fewer bikers passing each other all at once.
- Starting the hand cycle division **first** would likely ensure the entire event wraps up on time but might cause passing frustrations on the road as each division catches up.

## **Establish the race day timeline**

- Packet pickup and check-in
- Cyclist meeting, pre-race
- Start times by category or division
- List when and where certain roads may be blocked off
- Awards ceremony

## **Consider having a support vehicles on the course**

- One vehicle would ride behind the last rider. This vehicle will be there in case of an emergency or to pick up anyone that needs to drop out.
- Another vehicle could be on the course to help with directions or unexpected emergencies.

## **Consider categories and classifications for races**

- Competitive races are typically events that follow the guidelines set forth by the sanctioning body. Depending on the type of race, you may see one of the following:
  - [USA Cycling \(USAC\)](#)
  - [USA Crits](#)
  - [Union Cycliste Internationale \(UCI\)](#)
- Competitive races will follow a classification system for all adapted divisions. This will help establish race times and skill categories.
- For recreational races, develop a way to divide cyclists into various class systems or categories.



# Marketing



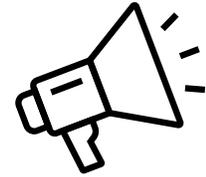
## Accessibility

In all materials used to market the race, make sure it is accessible and delivered in multiple formats like large print and high contrast colors. Ensure there is alt text for images in online material.



## Diversity

Include photos of athletes with a disability in the marketing plan. Make sure different cultural backgrounds, genders, and ages are represented.



## Terminology

Use inclusive terminology as you market the event. This includes phrase like "bike or hand cycle." Reach out to the local adapted sports organization or para-athletes to ensure appropriate language is being used.

## Recruitment

### Make it known that this is an inclusive event!

Be sure to use adapted sports centers, disability organizations, or Facebook profiling to reach your target audience. Send the promotional materials to the contacts that are listed and encourage participation!

