



RALLYING FOR ROOKIES

THE GUIDE FOR YOUR FIRST WINTER TRIAL

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RALLYING FOR ROOKIES

This guide is for crews with little or no experience of long-distance classic car rallies such as those organised by Classic Events (like the Winter Trial). It explains the basic concepts, the main types of control and how a rally day works, with practical tips along the way.

It does not cover car preparation or navigation techniques, and it does not replace the Regulations. It is a summary of the procedures you will meet: how a Time Control works, what a Self Start is, and how penalties are calculated. A glossary of terms is included at the end.

BEFORE THE EVENT

Read the Regulations. Both driver and navigator should read the event Regulations carefully; they can be downloaded from the website. This avoids unpleasant surprises, and if something unexpected happens during the event you will know where to look.

The Road Book. The Road Book is handed out on the Saturday before the start. It is a book of maps with the complete route already plotted, except for the Regularity Sections. You receive those during the week, day by day, and plot them on the maps yourself using the instructions supplied.

Not all route information is always issued in advance. Some sections, such as Regularity Sections, may only be handed out on the road, and some or all of the route may be given as Tulip (dot-arrow) instructions.

Practise regularities. Classic Events likes Regularities, and every second counts. Before the event, practise driving a set average speed as precisely as possible, as a crew, using:

- a trip meter (Halda or similar)
- a speed table, which lists the correct elapsed time at given distances for a given speed
- a stopwatch

DAY 0: SIGNING-ON, SCRUTINEERING AND THE TIME CARD

The day before the start you sign on (document check), the car is scrutineered (technical inspection), and you receive additional paperwork, clothing and other items.

Check what you have been given and file it neatly. Some of it will be needed soon after the start, such as plotting instructions for the Day 1 Regularity Sections that must be transferred to your maps. Organised paperwork saves digging in the back of the car just before a test.

THE TIME CARD

Once all formalities are complete you receive your personal time card. It is the most important document of the rally: losing it carries a very heavy penalty. The memory chip on the card is an integral part of it.

For each day, the time card lists:

- every control you must visit
- the opening and closing times of each control
- for Main Controls (MC) and Time Controls (TC), the Standard Time: the time at which a fictional Car 0 is due

Each control is named by its type, the Day or Leg number and its sequence number. For example, the third Time Control on Day 2, in Maastricht, is **TC 2.3 Maastricht**.

TIMING AND TIME PENALTIES



Rally Time

All controls use Rally Time: local time in the time zone where that day starts, derived from GPS. Since the rally uses the RallyCheck application, Rallytime is actually the time displayed on YOUR telephone.

Scheduled Time

Classic Events rallies run to Scheduled Time, not Target Time. You are given a time of day at which you are due at each Time Control, rather than a time allowance for each section. Your Scheduled Time = the control's Standard Time (on the time card) + the difference between your start time and Car O's start time.

Example: the Standard Time at the start (MC 1.1) is 08:00 and the start list gives you 08:24. Add 24 minutes to every Standard Time until the next regrouping. A control with Standard Time 10:25 therefore has a Scheduled Time of 10:49 for you.

Your start order changes every day and is normally not the same as your competition number. The offset can also change during the event, for example when gaps in the running order are closed at the end of a day. Notices are posted at Rally HQ and it is your responsibility to check them. Arrive at each restart control in good time in case gaps are closed.

PENALTIES AT TIME CONTROLS

Situation	Penalty
Booking in before your Scheduled Time	2 minutes per minute early
Booking in after your Scheduled Time + any Penalty Free Lateness	1 minute per minute late
Booking in 31 minutes or more late (beyond Maximum Permitted Lateness)	30 minutes, the same as missing the control

LATENESS CARRIES OVER; EARLY ARRIVAL DOES NOT

If you are late at one Time Control, you may be the same amount late at the next one without further penalty. You do not have to make up time, but it is wise to do so where you can, or to cut part of the route. A time cushion gives you a better chance of staying in the rally when things go wrong.

Early arrival works differently. If you book in early, you are still due at the next control at your original Scheduled Time, and you are not penalised for taking longer than the allowance on that section. If you run through several controls early, you are penalised at each of them.

Case	Control	Scheduled	Actual	Result
A	TC 1	10:24	10:22	2 min early: 4 min penalty
A	TC 2	11:14	11:14	On time: no penalty (52 min taken, 50 allowed)
B	TC 5	10:24	10:22	2 min early: 4 min penalty
B	TC 6	11:14	11:12	2 min early: 4 min penalty (50 min taken, as allowed)
B	TC 7	11:51	11:50	1 min early: 2 min penalty

PENALTY FREE LATENESS (PFL)

Some controls, mainly at the end of each Leg, carry Penalty Free Lateness: extra time you may use without penalty, for example in heavy traffic. PFL can be set before the event and shown on the time card (such as for a control in a busy city centre), or granted during the event after a delay. Controls where it applies are listed on the time card or in bulletins. You do not have to use it.

MAXIMUM PERMITTED LATENESS (MPL)

At most Time Controls the MPL is 30 minutes. Booking in 31 minutes or more late costs 30 minutes, the same as missing the control, and PFL does not apply. Passing a string of controls more than 30 minutes late counts as missing all of them, so get back within the 30 minutes as soon as possible. Exceeding the MPL is called OTL (Over Time Limit). **Always check the MPL of each individual control.**

Main Controls have their own limits: you may leave the MC-Out at most 15 minutes late, and arrive at the MC-In up to 30 minutes late, or any amount early, without penalty, as long as the control is manned.

A TYPICAL RALLY DAY

The start (MC-Out)

Each day starts according to a Start List giving every crew's individual start time. The starting order changes daily. The list is posted on the Notice Board, usually the evening before and at the latest one hour before the first car starts. Keep an eye on the Notice Board: all official notices are published there.

On Day 1 the start is usually under the start arch, where your time card is filled in. You will often also receive a GPS logger. Fix it in a good position on the dashboard. Depending on the type, you may have to hand it in with your time card at the end of the day. The logger is a backup for the in-car track-and-trace system.

On later days the start is usually in the hotel lobby. The start marshal sits at a desk, fills in your time card at your start time and often hands out the logger and that day's documents: regularity routes, test instructions and so on. You sign to confirm you have received everything. From that moment your rally day has started, so the driver should be in the car, engine warm, right outside the hotel door.

The first and last controls of each day are Main Controls (MC): Time Controls with a special status. You may not be more than 15 minutes late at the MC-Out.



Time Controls (TC)

The next control is often a Time Control. It may be at the roadside, but is usually in a café in a village centre where you can buy refreshments if you have time. The Road Book gives the exact location. TCs are marked by a white board with a red clock.

The marshal enters the time at which you hand over your time card, so do not hand it over before your Scheduled Time.

Lunch

Around midday there is usually a TC at the lunch venue. Finish eating before your Scheduled Time, because that is when you must leave again. All lunch stops have a Lunch Out control only.

Along the route

During the day you will drive Regularity Sections and Tests, and pass various route checks. Each is explained in the sections below.

The finish (MC-In)

The last control of the day is the MC-In, usually but not always in the hotel lobby. You may arrive up to 30 minutes late, or any amount early, without penalty, as long as the control is manned. Daily results and overall classifications are posted on the Notice Board as soon as possible, and each crew normally receives a printed results sheet (see Results sheet below).

REGULARITY SECTIONS

Most competitive sections are Regularity Sections: you must keep precisely to a set average speed, which often changes at defined points within the section. Timing on a regularity is independent of the Time Controls. After the section, you return to your TC schedule.

THREE WAYS TO START

Manned start (RSM). A marshal team at the start line starts cars in order of arrival, normally one per minute, as soon as possible after you arrive. Reset your trip meter and stopwatch to zero before the countdown. If there is a queue, ask the marshal to note your Arrival Time on your time card: any waiting time beyond 3 minutes is penalty-free at the next TC.

Self Start (RSS). There is no marshal. Your start time is your recorded time at the previous control (TC or PC) plus the number of minutes shown on the time card. This is where an exact Rally Time clock pays off. The start line is described in the Road Book, usually with a photo, and normally marked by a pair of crossed orange arrows. Drive to it, wait for your start time and go. If several cars booked in at the previous control in the same minute, the marshal there will shorten the interval, for example to 30 seconds.



Logger start (RSL). Similar to a Self Start, but you choose your own start time on any whole minute, and the GPS logger records it, rounded down to the whole minute. Observe the rules in the Regulations that prevent cars starting too close together, such as starting only on a whole minute and never in the same minute as the car ahead. Whichever start applies, the moment you leave the start line is your start time: start your stopwatch and trip meter exactly then.

TIMING POINTS (TP)

Each section has one or more Timing Points, whose locations are secret until you reach them. Times are recorded to the second, always measured from the start of the section.

- **Manned TPs:** you are timed on sight, often around a tight bend, so speeding up or slowing down once you spot the marshal makes no sense. Then drive slowly to the marshal, mind their toes and stop to have your time card filled in. Overtaking in sight of a marshal is forbidden because it confuses the timing.
- **Logger points:** unmanned TPs where the GPS logger records your time. Smaller boards may mark them.
- **Board colours:** intermediate TPs have a yellow Classic Events board; the final TP of each section has a red board.

After a manned TP, get back on schedule as quickly as possible. After the final TP, keep following your plotted route and return to your TC schedule.

TYPES OF REGULARITY

- 1. Conventional regularity:** timing is based on your own average-speed tables.
- 2. Benularity:** timing is based on a table of distances and corresponding times, issued before the section.
- 3. Jogularity:** route and timing are defined by a series of landmarks (sometimes as Tulips) with their distances and ideal times. Unlike traditional Jogularity, Timing Points are not necessarily at one of the given landmarks.

TESTS

Tests are held on private roads or closed areas. Test instructions are handed out before the start, usually as you leave the hotel at the MC-Out.

Start (TS). Like a manned regularity start: cars start in order of arrival, as soon as possible after arriving. The same Arrival Time rule applies if there is a queue.

Bogey Time. Each test has a Bogey Time, which may be 0:00. If your time exceeds it, the difference is your penalty.

Stop astride. At the finish (TF), and sometimes at other points in the test, you must stop astride a line (à cheval): the car comes to a complete halt with both front wheels across the line and neither rear wheel over it. Overshooting or not stopping completely is penalised. At the finish the clock stops only once the car is completely stationary.

Lap Consistency Test. A special form of test; the Regulations explain how it works.

Experienced drivers say: "You cannot win a test, only lose one." The few seconds you might gain by driving too fast must be weighed against the minutes you lose by taking a wrong route or hitting a cone, not to mention the time lost if the car breaks or is damaged.

ROUTE CHECKS

These checks confirm that you followed the correct route. Time is not important, only that you passed.

Check	In Road Book?	How it works
Passage Control (PC)	Yes	Manned (white board with a red stamp) or recorded by GPS logger, a stamp, or an answer to a question written on the time card
Secret Check (SC)	No	Usually recorded by GPS logger; if manned, marked by a white board with a red stamp
Speed Check (SPC)	No	GPS logger, normally twice a day in built-up areas; also checks your route

Closing times. A PC or SC closes 30 minutes after the ideal passage time of the last competitor.

Speed Checks. A recorded speed more than 10 km/h over the local limit is penalised on the sliding scale in the Regulations. Serious or repeated speeding at these checks leads to **exclusion**. Missing a Speed Check is normally penalised in the same way as missing a Secret Check.

RESULTS SHEET

Your individual results sheet lists every control of the Leg. Where applicable, each line shows:

Column	Meaning
Control	Number and name of the control, as on the time card
Sched. Time	Your Scheduled Time, based on that Leg's starting order
Act. Time	The time you actually booked in
Elapsed	Time since the previous control or since the start of the regularity section
Ideal Time	The ideal time, mainly for regularity sections and tests
X	Wrong approach, a logger start too soon after the car ahead, or speeding at a Speed Check
M	Missed control
Late	Seconds (s) or minutes (m) late; a minus sign means early
PFL	Penalty Free Lateness carried from being late at a previous TC
Penalties	Penalty for this control (hh:mm:ss). For a regularity, all Timing Point penalties are added up, and capped, at the section's final TP. Tests get an extra line for penalties such as hitting a cone.
Total	Total penalties for the Leg
Query	Space to write a query about the results

If you have a question about your results, write it on the sheet, state the number of the control concerned, and hand it to the marshal at the MC, the Clerk of the Course or the event secretary.

ROUTES AND CATEGORIES

Trial and Challenge crews mostly follow the same route. Occasionally the Challenge category has a slightly shorter or quicker route, which is shown in the Road Book.

Sometimes Challenge crews drive the route of a Regularity Section without being timed. On these sections, a Challenge car caught by a Trial car must pull over and let it pass at the first safe opportunity.

GLOSSARY

Term	Meaning
Age Group	The age group of the car.
Arrival Time	Your arrival time at a manned regularity start or test start, noted when there is a queue. Waiting time beyond 3 minutes is penalty-free at the next TC.
Bogey Time	The set time for a test (may be 0:00). Any time above it is penalised.
Category	A grouping of crews, e.g. Trial, Challenge, Vintage or Club. All crews in a category share the same route, controls and times. Classification is by Category, then Age Group, then Class.
Class	A grouping based on engine capacity.
Clerk of the Course	The person with overall responsibility for running the event, including applying the Regulations.
Day	A part of the rally between two overnight halts.
GPS logger	A GPS unit with memory that records the car's position and speed every second. Timing Points, Passage Controls, Secret Checks and Speed Checks are based on this data.
Leg	A part of the rally separated from the next by a minimum set interval.
MC (Main Control)	The first and last control of a Leg (MC-Out and MC-In).
MPL (Max. Permitted Lateness)	The maximum lateness allowed at a TC or MC, usually 30 minutes.
Notice Board	The board, usually in the hotel lobby, where official notices are published.
Official Bulletin	An official notice that supplements or corrects the Regulations.
OTL (Over Time Limit)	Being later than the Maximum Permitted Lateness at a TC or MC.
PC (Passage Control)	A control shown in the Road Book that checks your route; time does not matter.
PFL (Penalty Free Lateness)	Time you may be late at a TC or MC without penalty, either set in advance on the time card or granted after a delay during the event.
Rally	An event with a set time schedule, held wholly or partly on public roads. It begins with signing-on and scrutineering and ends after the prize-giving.



Rally Time	The time of day used at all controls, derived from GPS in the time zone where that day starts.
Regularity Section	A section in which a set average speed must be kept precisely. The speed normally changes at defined points.
Regulations	The rules under which the event is organised and run.
Road Book	The route and all other necessary and useful information about the rally.
Route Bulletin	A notice of a change to the route, itinerary or schedule.
RSL (Regularity Start Logger)	A regularity start where the GPS logger records your start time as you cross the start line.
RSM (Regularity Start Manned)	A regularity start with a marshal team.
RSS (Regularity Self Start)	A regularity start where your start time is your time at the previous TC or PC plus a set number of minutes.
Scheduled Time	The time at which your crew is due at an MC or TC.
SC (Secret Check)	A control not shown in the Road Book that checks your route; time does not matter.
Sector	A part of a Leg: from the first car's start to the first regrouping, between two regroupings, or from the last regrouping to the end of the Leg.
SPC (Speed Check)	A control not shown in the Road Book that checks your speed and route; time does not matter.
Standard Time	The time at which the fictional Car 0 is due at an MC or TC.
Stop astride (à cheval)	Stopping completely with both front wheels across a line and neither rear wheel over it.
TC (Time Control)	A control where you must book in during the minute of your Scheduled Time.
Test	A set course, usually in a closed area, to be driven correctly and as quickly as possible. Errors such as hitting a cone are penalised.
Time card	Your crew's personal card listing all controls; marshals record your times on it. Its memory chip is an integral part of the card.
TP (Timing Point)	An intermediate or final control on a Regularity Section where times are recorded to the second.
Tulips	Route instructions in "dot-arrow" diagrams.



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