

Rallying -- A Primer

A rally is an automotive contest in which teams comprised of a driver and a navigator follow a prescribed common route at specified legal and reasonable average speeds. *PRECISE* driving and navigating are stressed.

The idea of a rally (sometimes called a TSD rally for "Time, Speed, Distance") is, quite simply, to follow an established course at an established speed. Penalty points are assessed by straying off course, by driving too fast or too slowly, or by missing course markers (landmarks). The car with the fewest number of penalty points (lowest score, as in golf) wins.

In our rally most cars won't be sports cars -- so the rally is planned for safety and scenery -- not spectacular automotive performance. We'll just try to look cool in our minivans and Prius'.

If you've never rallied before, or if it's been years and years, you still have an excellent chance to win because the rally is run with no special rally equipment. For our rally the only equipment needed is the odometer in your car, a watch capable of showing minutes and seconds, and a pencil. It'll be easier for the navigator to work if you also have a clipboard.

Here's how it works:

When you arrive at the starting point on rally day you will be assigned a starting time and car number and will be given your information packet. Cars will line up at the starting line in sequence and will begin the rally at two-minute intervals. You get to open the packet one minute before your starting time; one minute later you're on your way!

The detailed instructions (in your packet) will tell you when to turn, how fast to go, what course markers to look for and so forth. You follow each instruction in sequence - religiously.

Rule #1 is "Don't get lost"! Staying on course is the most important thing about rallying. If you get off course, get back on as soon as possible. Sometimes just finishing wins the rally!

The second rule is to maintain as close to the average speed (dictated by the rally instructions) as possible. You will be penalized for arriving early or late at the finish line and at intermediate CheckPoints. And to discourage speeding, the penalty for arriving too early is twice as great as the penalty for arriving too late.

Each rally leg (the distance between CheckPoints) stands on it's own. If you have a large error on a given leg, don't worry; every time you go through a CheckPoint

it's a new ball game. There will be one or more CheckPoints along the course where your performance will be measured. Sometimes, you are asked to stop at CheckPoints; at others, you are not and will continue driving the rally course.

The driver and navigator have decidedly different roles and must work as a team in order for the team to win. The driver's job is to drive safely, maintain the correct average speed and to look for course markers. The navigator's job is to alert the driver to course markers, average speed changes and turns -- and to figure out whether going a bit faster or slower than the current pace is indicated. Remember that this is a team effort; relationships have been shattered by rallies...we've only lost one team in eleven years to the rigors of the Rally.

Rally Rules

The following are a set of general rules applying to well-run rallies:

1. Follow each instruction until the next one takes over.
2. Write the answers to questions asked in the spaces provided.
3. Write your car number in the upper right-hand corner of the instructions.
4. Unpaved roads DO NOT EXIST for the purpose of the rally (see more on this under what constitutes an opportunity below).
5. Driveways, entrances to parking lots, shopping centers, weigh stations and so forth also do not exist for rally purposes.
6. Course markers can be seen from the car with no need to get out.
7. Unless you're told to turn, continue to travel in the same direction you've been going! **Follow the natural, dominant direction of the road.** Continue in the natural direction of travel until instructed otherwise.
8. Don't ever stop unless instructed to do so.
9. Read one instruction ahead of the one you're working on. Some are **IMMEDIATELY AFTER** the prior one.
10. Don't start chatting. Don't answer cell phones while driving. If one of you needs to concentrate on something non-Rally (say going around cyclists), the other should be still searching for the next instruction.
11. Synchronize your watches to the second using our clock at the Starting Line.

12. Count opps, stops signs OR traffic lights – don't combine. When we say 3rd stop sign, don't look down the road to see if it is actually an opportunity. Your instruction is to only count stop signs.

Terms

The following terms will usually be found in rally instructions; they simply permit standard abbreviations.

cm " course marker"

Used only to reassure you that you are on course. A cm can be on either side of the road unless the instruction says differently. Cms are easily visible from the car. If the cm appears in quotation marks it means "sign that says" rather than the object itself.

For example:

cm "Winslow Church" means "sign that says Winslow Church"

cm Winslow Church means the church itself.

bear go in a direction of less than 90 degrees to your present direction of travel as, "bear left". An alternative meaning is "large fierce animal" but we won't normally use that one on the rally.

acute a turn considerably more than 90 degrees relative to your present direction of travel.

Y intersection an intersection shaped like the letter "Y" where you are approaching the fork in the "Y" from the bottom leg. You can only bear right or left at a Y intersection.

T intersection an intersection shaped like the letter "T" where you are approaching from the bottom leg; at a T intersection you can only turn left or right.

cast means "change average speed to". Change your average speed to the reading given and maintain that speed until further notice.

opportunity for rally purposes, an "opportunity" is a valid street or road. For example, "turn left at the third opportunity past Winslow Church" would mean to turn left at the third PAVED road past the Winslow Church. Driveways, parking lot entrances and, of course, dirt roads are NOT opportunities nor are one-way

streets going the wrong way.

For example, these roads are not opportunities:

- Driveways
- Weigh stations
- One-way roads
- No Outlet sign
- Not A Through Road sign
- Dead End sign
- Private Road sign
- Dirt or unpaved roads
- Entrances to shopping centers
- Entrances to businesses or business parks
- Entrances to apartments, condos, townhomes, houses, etc.
- Entrances to schools, wineries, resorts, inns, parks or farms

In any well-run rally, unpaved roads, driveways, entrances to shopping centers, etc. simply do not exist. If you are told to turn at the third opportunity and you encounter six unpaved roads or driveways, none count as opportunities.

Let's say you're counting left opportunities. Ask yourself, can I turn left here? Does it matter if the roads look like they go to the same place? No. Does it matter what the street signs, NOT ROAD SIGNS, say? No. Remember, you are counting opportunities to turn, not counting streets.