



Columbia Association Sprint & Super Sprint Triathlon

Frequently Asked Questions

General FAQs

1. Do I need to go to Athlete Check In the day before or on race morning?

Yes. It is very important that each athlete go to athlete check in either the day before the race or the morning of. It is here that each participant will receive their timing chip, race numbers, and other important information about the event. This is a mandatory activity.

2. Is everyone really fast? How serious is this race?

Athletes of all speeds and abilities participate in triathlon. You can expect to see participants that are racing to win the race, participants that are experiencing their first triathlon and everyone in between.

3. How early should I show up for my first race?

This is a common question from first-time racers, and we usually recommend 90 minutes. You'll have to go to the bathroom, warm-up and stretch, and unlike a single sport event like running, multisport racing requires you to stage your gear (in transition). Also, since it is your first time, there are bound to be questions you will have and things you will forget to do. After a race or two, you will have the drill down and can modify that time.

4. What do I do with my bike while I am swimming and running?

The center of activity for any multisport race is the transition area. This is an area, usually surrounded by a fence of some kind, that contains enough bike racks for all of the competitors in the race. At the CA Triathlon, you will be assigned a specific transition spot. When you finish the swim leg, you will come to this spot and retrieve your bike. When you finish the bike ride, you will return it to the exact same spot on the bike racks and begin your run. After the race is finished, you can return to your transition spot and reclaim your bike.

5. How does a transition area work?

Be sure to wear your wrist band. This is your all access pass to enter and exit the transition area before, during and after the race. If you forget your wristband on race morning, go to Athlete Check In and get a new bracelet.

Once you enter the transition area, locate your spot for your bike. You must "rack" your bike at you assigned spot. Next, lay out a towel on the ground beside your bike, being careful not to invade the space of your neighbor.

Lay out your bike shoes (if you use them), bike helmet, run shoes, shirt and shorts, sunglasses, gloves, or whatever else you may need during the race onto your towel. Once your gear is in place, double check your bike to make sure it is in the appropriate gear for starting the bike ride.

Next, take a walk through the transition area. Find the entrance where you will come in after the swim, and make sure you can quickly locate your bike.

6. What is body marking?

Athletes will need to have a volunteer body mark their arms with their racer number. Please do not do this yourself prior to race morning. Body marking will be in the transition area on race morning prior to the start of the race.

SWIM FAQS

1. Do I have to wear a swim cap during the swim?

Participants will not be issued a swim cap for this race. Wearing your own swim cap is optional but recommended if you have long hair or your typically train with a swim cap.

2. Do I need to wear a wetsuit?

Wet suits are not permitted for this race.

3. What if I cannot continue swimming? What are my options?

If during the swim portion of this race you are unable to continue swimming, please stop at the end of the pool. You may exit the pool, but you will need to let officials know that you will not be completing the swim. Race management will take your timing chip from you but you will be permitted to complete the rest of the race (bike and run courses).

4. How does the swim start?

All participants need to be on the pool deck at 7:30 AM. At this time, race management will provide race instruction and begin to line up swimmers for the swim start.

This race will use a time trail start (participants will start one person at a time). The swim will be self-seed based on your individual 100-yard pool swim time. The Sprint distance participants will be lined up first. Super Sprint participants will be lined up and start after all of the Sprint participants complete the swim portion of the race.

How to determine your 100 yard time:

Time yourself swimming one length of a pool at 60% effort. Multiply this time by 4. This is your 100-yard time. Example: Mary swims one length of the pool in 45 seconds. It will take her 180 seconds to complete 4 lengths of the pool. Her 100-yard time is 3 minutes. Please know your time for race morning.

Sprint Distance - Athletes will enter the pool feet first and will swim down and back in one lane before touching the wall and going underneath the lane rope to start your next down and back. Flip turns will not be permitted and will result in a :30 second penalty.

Required Distance: Sprint - 400 yard (16 pool lengths – see diagram in the Athlete Guide)

Super Sprint Distance - Athletes will enter the pool feet first and will swim down the lane and will go underneath the lane rope to start your next length swim. Flip turns will not be permitted and will result in a :30 second penalty.

Required Distance: Sprint - Super Sprint - 200 yard (8 pool lengths – see in the Athlete Guide)

Wet Suit Policy

Wet suits are not permitted for this race.

BIKE FAQs

1. Do I have to wear a helmet?

Absolutely!! It must be in good shape (no cracks). Buckle your helmet anytime you are on your bike. You will be disqualified if you are on your bike without your helmet buckled anywhere on the course. If you are in transition, you will be assessed a variable time penalty.

2. Why do I need bar end plugs?

So you don't give yourself or someone else a nasty biopsy. Not having openings on your bike solidly plugged is a DQ! Most bikes come with bar end plugs already affixed to the bike. 99% of participants will not need to worry about this.

3. Is a mountain Bike OK?

The technical answer to this is yes. However, the CA Triathlon is a road race, meaning that there is no off-road terrain. Competitors should consider riding a "road" or "hybrid" bike if possible. A road bike will provide a smoother ride and will help the competitor navigate thru bike gears.

4. Do I need to wear my bib number on the bike course?

No. You are only required to wear your bib number on the run course; however, your bike adhesive number must be on your bike at all times.

5. How far to the right must I ride?

Stay as far to the right as possible, but generally about the width of a standard bike lane – about a meter. Pass on the left, and then return to the right.

6. Can I pass on the right?

No, pass on the left. If someone is blocking you, ask (loudly!) this person to move to the right, so that you may pass.

7. What is the draft zone?

The draft zone is a rectangular area 7 meters long and 2 meters wide around each bike and 30 meters behind and 15 meters next to a moving motor vehicle. As a practical guide, keep 3 bike lengths between you and the biker ahead of you. You must complete your pass within 15 seconds, and once you enter the draft zone, you must exit from the front, so be confident of your pass.

8. If I'm passed, do I have to wait 15 seconds before I can re-pass?

No, but you must drop back completely out of the draft zone. Do not attempt to "catch up" by getting up out of the saddle and pedaling fast. You will be called for an overtaken penalty.

9. Can I ride in transition?

No. There is no riding of bicycles in the transition area. If there is a mount/dismount line you must observe it.

10. Can I drop my water bottle or gel packs anywhere?

No. Toss trash in a receptacle, or in the drop zone within sight of an aid station, or you may be cited for abandoned equipment.

11. Can I accept help?

Only accept help from race organizers or official volunteers. Accepting it from others is considered unauthorized assistance, and you may be penalized.

12. Can I put my bike anywhere I want?

No. Rack your bike and put all of your gear in the space race management has designated for you. Rack with your "front wheel down" on the side of your assigned space.

13. What if I go off course?

You must re-enter the course at the same spot you left it.

14. May I wear my head set or earbuds?

No. Headsets, radios, head phones and personal audio devices are prohibited.

RUN FAQs

1. May I wear my head set or earbuds?

No. Headsets, radios, head phones and personal audio devices are prohibited.

2. Can someone pace me?

No. Pacing is illegal if they are not in the race. You may have someone provide you with split times.

3. Do I have to wear a number?

Yes, you must wear your number and it must be visible from the front.

4. May I carry my own water bottle?

Yes, but it must not be a glass container.