



135 Commercial St. NE
Salem Oregon
Mon-Fri - 10-6
Sat - 10-5
Closed Sun
503-364-4198
800-423-3460

Tips from the Willamette Valley Road Runners Club

These tips for Race Directors are also available on the Willamette Valley Roadrunners Club Website – wvroadrunners.org. Thank you to Mick Evans for his continued work and partnership in promoting events throughout the Willamette Valley!

When to hold the race:

Races are held year round in Oregon. May through October are the best months. Check race calendars to make sure there are no popular events the same time period as your intended race date. The race calendar is a good source – <http://www.activesalem.com/events/>

Where to hold the race:

Options are within a city/county park or on public streets. A park is the best choice as traffic control and runner safety is much less of an issue. Shorter races like 5Ks can easily be fit into local parks such as Bush Pasture and Minto-Brown Island Park.

What race distance:

Local races (Salem/Keizer) usually range from 1 mile to Half Marathons. A nice manageable distance would be a 5K (3.1 miles) – that distance attracts runners/walkers of all abilities.

When to start planning:

For a new event, at least 6 months prior.

Event permit:

Make sure you check with local authorities to see if you need an event permit.

Race Liability Insurance:

Always a good idea, and this may be a requirement for your permit.

Entry Fees:

Look at other races to see how much they charge, for a 5K or 10K, \$10-20 is normal. It's also normal to encourage people to sign up early by increasing the entry fee for day of race sign ups.

Tee Shirts:

Consider whether you want to sell shirts printed with the race logo. Be careful here, in bulk this will cost you around \$13 per shirt and you want to be able to sell them all.

Sponsors:

Check with local business to see if they'll sponsor you with either cash, or giveaway items/door prizes.

Advertising your event:

Printed fliers in local stores/businesses – not a bad idea to do locally, though, events are trending towards online advertising, which is usually free and you avoid printing costs.

Advertising online – the 2 most popular (and free) sites are www.wvroadrunners.org/events.php and RaceCenter.com



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Race registration:

You'll need some kind of entry form for runners to fill out before the race. Most common info needed on this form will be:

- First name
- Last name
- Gender
- Date of birth (age)
- Address & phone no
- Race distance (if more than one distance)
- Shirt size (if applicable)
- Signature indicating they have read the waiver.

These entry forms are normally printed, are part of fliers, and a good supply should be available for day of race entries. You can also have online registration at sites like RunSignUp.com or SignMeUp.com.

Race timing:

You'll need to decide if you're going to time your event, provide race results or just have a fun run with no timing or results. If you're going to time the event and provide results I'd recommend using a race management company such as Spiridon Race Management, Eclectic Edge or Race Northwest. They'll all be able to handle timing and provide you with advice on age groups and bib numbers etc.

Prizes:

Consider if you'll be awarding prizes for winners, age group finishers. The most common is some kind of trophy for the first man and woman (and sometimes first Masters man and woman) and ribbons (1st, 2nd & 3rd) for the age group finishers. These items can be obtained locally at trophy stores. If you have a kids event, they love finisher ribbons.

Planning your race course:

Now that you've decided on a distance, you need to plan the race route. Most courses are in a form of some kind of loop and start and finish at the same place. Your race management/timing company can help you with this.

During the race you'll need traffic cones and volunteers to make sure that your runners don't get lost. You should also consider posting race course maps on the day of race, so that your runners can study them. (Do not mark your course with anything permanent like spray paint)

Make sure there are bathrooms or porta-potties at your start finish area.

Food/drinks:

Decide if you'll be providing food and liquids during and after the race. At the minimum you should have a water station set up at the start/finish area, and possibly one on course. A water station consists of a table, water dispenser and paper cups. Volunteers fill the cups and hand them to the runners. The water station at the start/finish line can be unmanned.



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Day of race:

Make sure you have a list of chores/activities and have volunteers assigned to them prior to this day. You'll need volunteers for:

- Setting up and marking the course
- Manning the course to show runners the correct way to go
- Handing out bib nos etc to pre-registered runners
- Signing up day of race entries
- Manning the water stations
- Preparing food (if provided)
- Selling shirts (if applicable)
- Handy items to have for registration:
 - Entry forms
 - Cash box with \$1, \$5 bills to make change
 - Pens/pencils
 - Paper clips
 - Masking tape
 - Felt pens
 - Safety pins (if race bib nos are provided)
 - Tables and chairs for volunteers

Day of race registration organization:

Consider how you'll organize this, it can frequently be a bottleneck, sometimes delaying that start of races. It's most common to have several different tables/volunteers :

1. A table where pre-registered runners pick up their race materials.
2. A table where day of race entrants can sign up.
3. A table with entry forms and pens for the day of race entrants to fill them out before lining up at table 2

Emergency Response:

Have a plan in place to handle medical emergencies, at a minimum, cell phones to call 911. A medical kit is handy for minor scrapes & bruises.

After the race:

Make sure you have enough weary volunteers to clean up the area (and course) and leave the place looking spotless.

I'd recommend you look at other race fliers to get an idea of the information presented on them, and also to attend some local races, see how they're organized, before, during and after. A race timing/management company as mentioned above can be really helpful with other aspects of your event too.