



USA TRIATHLON
RACE DIRECTOR RESOURCE GUIDE:

TRANSITION: LOGISTICS PLANNING





INTRODUCTION:

Transition is a race component unique to multisport racing. As the venue that ties together the different race disciplines, it's a dynamic environment where athletes are constantly in motion. An organized, efficient layout goes a long way to establish and maintain a safe flow of participants as they move through each portion of the event.

In this section, we will primarily focus on singular Transition areas, where all of the race's transitions occur within one footprint. For example, in a triathlon with a singular Transition area all swim, bike, and run switches occur within the same geographic area. For duathlon, all run and bike transitions occur within the same area. In the last section, we will review considerations for Split Transition Areas where these switches occur in separate locations:

- Venue Planning
- Anatomy of Transition
- Transition Layout
- Amenities
- Timeline
- Swimmer Accountability
- Split Transition Areas

**Note: While this guide does provide recommendations for Transition, all planning and decision-making regarding the event is at the discretion of the Race Director. While direction is provided on the competition rules, it is not a replacement for the competition rules. For questions about the rules and their application at your event, please reach out to rulesandofficials@usatriathlon.org.*

VENUE PLANNING:

The Transition Area is the “home base” of a multisport, where athletes stage their equipment to allow for an easy “transition” from one leg of the race to the next. In triathlon, the switch from the swim to the bike is referred to as T1 (Transition 1) and the switch from the bike to the run is referred to as T2 (Transition 2). The Transition Area is strategically organized to help facilitate a smooth and efficient changeover between race disciplines. Here are a few key principles to consider when selecting a Transition venue:

- **Sufficient Size:** Gather the dimensions of the space by collecting measurements on-site and/or using a mapping software (i.e. Google Earth) to plot the footprint. Create a to-scale site plan where you can plug in representations of the different race elements, such as bike racks, fencing, toilets, tents, etc. to see relative spacing and capacities. Reference the *Transition Layout* section below for more guidance on Transition components and standard dimensions.
- **Secure:** Transition will be the central hub for athlete equipment before, during, and after the race. The space must be able to be secured, either with existing venue resources or by bringing in temporary support for the duration of the event. Security can take a few different forms:
 - **Fencing:** The Transition area must be enclosed to keep spectators/general public from entering the space. If fencing does not already exist at the venue, work with a local equipment vendor to rent temporary panels to enclose the space.
 - **Lighting:** In scenarios where equipment is out overnight, it is important that Transition is well-lit to discourage outside parties from tampering with the setup. Also consider that early morning race start times may mean athletes are accessing Transition before sunrise. From a safety perspective, ensure there is enough light that the masses can safely navigate their way through the space. This may necessitate the rental of light towers to supplement any existing lighting on-site.
 - **Personnel:** In addition to the measures above, it is best practice to have personnel on-site to monitor the area. Consult with local law enforcement and/or private security companies about providing assets that help to secure the perimeter of the space and are able to patrol the area to keep out outsiders.
- **Surface:** Transition areas can be constructed at venues with a variety of conditions. Ideally, the area is built on a hard, even surface such as asphalt or concrete, but grass and astroturf are also commonly used due to the availability of space. As you consider the viability of a venue to serve as the Transition Area, evaluate:

DID YOU KNOW?

All USAT Sanctioned events are required to have a secure Transition Area. Transition must be enclosed with hard fencing, soft fencing, or by some other means.

FLATNESS

The ground should be relatively flat and even to ensure the stability of bike racks and bike storage. A flat surface free of holes or hazards allows for a faster, safer transition experience for athletes.

ACCESSIBILITY

Transition, and the areas surrounding the entrance/exits, should be accessible to athletes in wheelchairs. While able-bodied athletes spend their time in Transition on-foot, adaptive athletes may need to navigate handcycles (bike course) and racing wheelchairs (run course) through Transition.

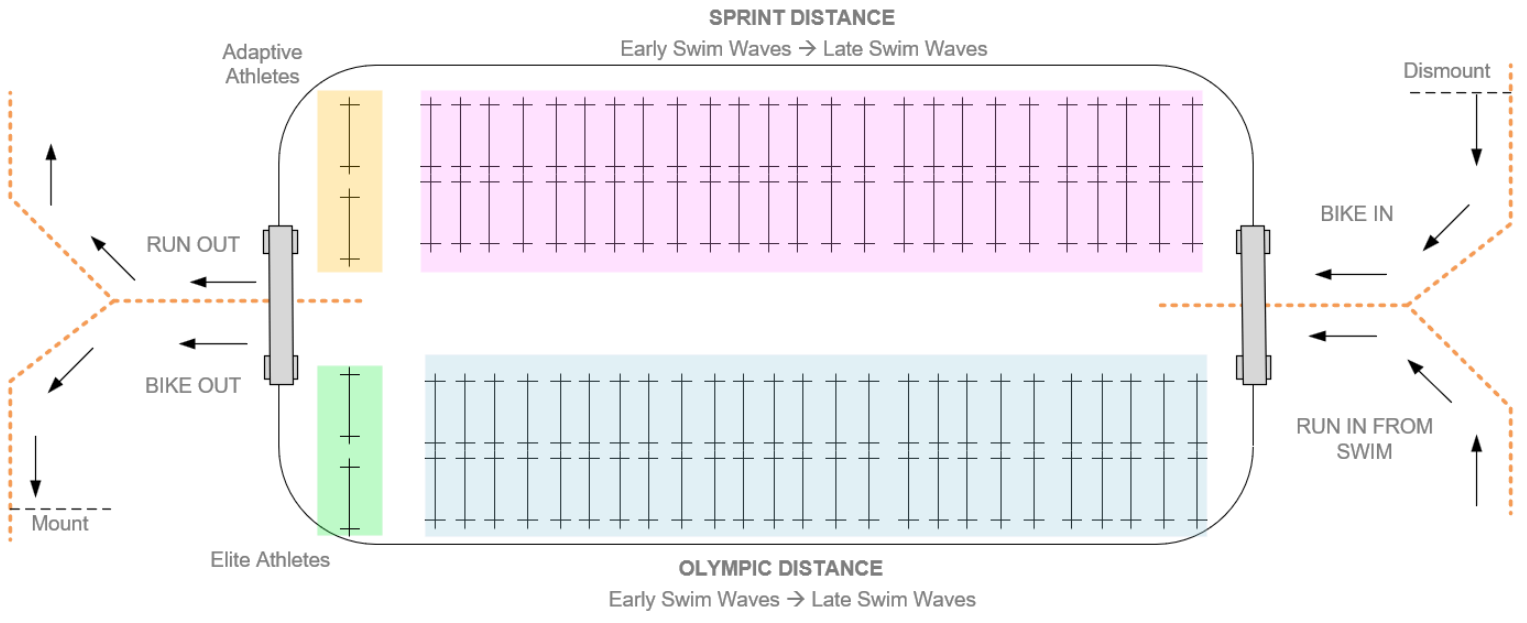
WEATHER EFFECTS

Consider the impact of weather conditions on the chosen surface, such as rain affecting the grass or sand becoming unstable. Be prepared with potential contingency plans to deal with flooding, large puddles, and/or slippery conditions.

- Course Access Points:** As the central hub for race operations, the Transition area is the connective tissue that ties together the legs of the race. When mapping out the course route, Race Directors often start by identifying a potential area for Transition and building out from there to attain the necessary distances for each portion of the race. Geographically, the Transition area needs to be positioned in a location that touches all three disciplines. Simply put, Transition serves as the following:



ANATOMY OF TRANSITION:





Access Points: The diagram above highlights the one-directional flow of athletes as they move through Transition during T1 (swim to bike) and T2 (bike to run):

- Run in from the Swim: The area needs to be close enough to the swim exit that athletes can run (barefoot) from the water to Transition. While there is no set maximum distance between the Swim Exit and Transition, it is generally recommended to keep this within a few hundred meters.
- Bike Out: Once athletes have entered the Transition area from the swim, they will head to their designated bike rack to change from their swim gear (i.e. wetsuits, goggles, swim caps) to their bike gear (cycling shoes, helmet, sunglasses, etc.). Athletes will pick up their bikes and run/walk them out of the Transition area to the designated mount area, where they can begin to ride.



- Bike In: As athletes complete the bike course and return to Transition they will approach the dismount area where they will need to get off their bikes. Bikes will need to be run/walked into Transition and returned to their designated racks, where athletes will swap out their bike equipment for run equipment (i.e. sneakers, hat, etc.)
- Run Out: Athletes will exit Transition for the last time to begin the run, which will culminate at the Finish Line.

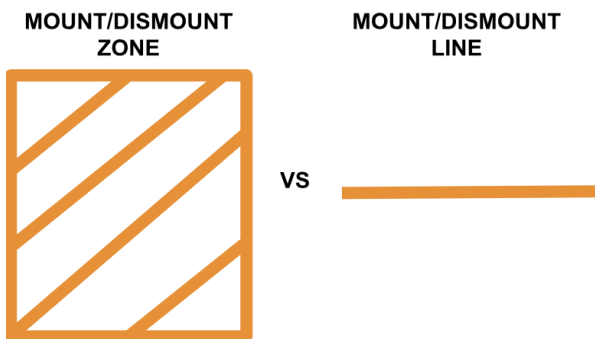
DID YOU KNOW?

Per USAT rules, an athlete's helmet must be securely fastened at all times when they are in possession of the bike, including in Transition. This means the helmet should be fastened from the time the athlete removes their bike from the rack at the start of the bike leg, until after they have placed their bike on the rack at the finish of the bike leg.

Pro Tip:

The Transition access points at the Bike In/Out and Run In/Out should be clearly marked and easy for athletes to identify from a distance. Consider using truss, inflatable arches, and/or banners to help direct athletes to the proper entrance/exit.

Mount / Dismount Points: When athletes begin the bike course, they will be required to walk/run their bikes from the rack out of transition until they reach the designated Mount Zone. The Mount Zone should be clearly marked with signage and ground tape/decals to define the area where they are able to get on their bikes. The same holds true for the Dismount Zone when athletes are returning from the bike course. Be sure to provide ample warning signage leading up to the dismount so cyclists have time to slow down before coming to a complete stop within the zone.



When marking out the mount/dismount points, consider creating a defined zone, as opposed to a singular line. By using a line, this conveys to the athlete that they have to get on/off the bike at this one and only spot. This



backups as all athletes feel the need to exactly mount after the line or stop to dismount exactly before the line. Instead, use your marking materials to create an established area for the mount/dismount. This helps to spread out where cyclists will stop to get on/off their bikes, creating a safer experience less prone to traffic jams.

Pro Tip:

When reviewing race day responsibilities with the staff, determine whether the Mount/Dismount setup will be handled by the Bike Course team or the Transition team. Since this area falls between jurisdictions, this can easily fall through the cracks.

Race Groups: There are a few race groups that require extra space. As you determine the square footage needs of the Transition area, consider carving out designated footprints for the following:

- **Elite Athletes:** Elite bike racks are typically positioned in a prime location within Transition to ensure they have easy access and a clear path to navigate the area without obstructions or congestion. Typically, elite racks are positioned near the Bike In / Bike Out to minimize the distance the athletes need to run with their bikes before they mount. If possible, consider providing elites with more racking space than what is traditionally allocated for age group athletes. During a close race, there might be multiple pros transitioning simultaneously, so the additional space can help reduce the risk athletes will interfere with one another.
- **Adaptive Athletes:** If you have a race division for adaptive athletes it is best practice to provide a separate and distinct racking area within Transition. This helps ensure both adaptive athletes and age group athletes have ample space for their equipment and the transition process. Adaptive athlete racks should be as close as possible to the entrance/exits of Transition. This will be especially important in instances where the surface of Transition is unpaved. If possible, look to position adaptive athlete racks against a wall. Having a wall on one side provides athletes with more room to maneuver without having to keep an eye on the traffic coming/going in the aisle. Below are a few considerations for specific adaptive athlete categories. For more information on race logistics planning for adaptive divisions, check out the **Para & Adaptive Triathlon Resource Guide**.

ADAPTIVE ATHLETE AREA IN TRANSITION

CATEGORY	CONSIDERATIONS
Visually Impaired Athletes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Plan for double the rack space, as you will need to accommodate both the athlete’s equipment as well as their Guide’s equipment. ● Account for extra aisle width in the areas with VI athletes as a racked tandem bike will extend further in the aisle than an upright bike. Athletes will need enough space to pass behind the bike(s) once racked.

Ambulatory Athletes	Leave enough space around the rack to be able to position a folding chair that can be used when affixing and adjusting prosthetic equipment
Wheelchair Athletes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wheelchair athletes will have to rack both their handcycle and their racing wheelchair. Account for at least 6 feet of rack space for these athletes.

- Relays:** In a triathlon relay, team members take turns completing different legs of the race. At events with a relay division, there is typically a designated, enclosed area adjacent to or inside transition that is used specifically for relay exchanges. The purpose of this “Relay Pen” or “Relay Exchange Zone” is to facilitate the handoff of the timing chip between team members. The relay pen should be positioned in a place where the flow for relay athletes is clearly marked, and consistent, and does not interfere with the transition route of other race categories.



In circumstances where the relay division is fairly small or a relay pen is not possible, team members may be instructed to meet directly at their bike rack. Plan accordingly to mitigate any congestion that may occur as a result of relay athletes waiting in the aisles.

Pro Tip:

An important piece of relay logistics planning is determining the time frame(s) when relay participants will be able to enter/exit the Transition area/relay pen. For example, athletes who are only doing the run portion of the event may want to arrive at Transition later in the day, after the race has started. Conversely, an athlete who has completed the swim and has handed off their timing chip to their team member may want to exit Transition to meet up with their teammates at the Finish Line. Take a close look at the race timeline and entry/exit flow of the Transition area to determine the instructions for how and when relay athletes will be allowed to come and go from the space.

TRANSITION LAYOUT:

As you map out the layout of the Transition Area there are a few key considerations to take into account:

- Flow:** Ensure there is enough space to define clear aisles wide enough to accommodate the flow of participants, volunteers, and event staff. Establishing an organized athlete flow within Transition and at the entry/exit points is a crucial safety measure that also helps to maintain fairness among all

!! NO CROSSOVER !!

The cardinal rule of triathlon planning is to avoid any course flow that might lead to the potential crossover of athletes. Once the race begins, Transition quickly becomes a flurry of activity with athletes coming and going, creating a high risk for collisions. By establishing clearly delineated lanes and designated ingress/egress routes prior

to the event, you can help create a safer Transition environment as the race is happening. When mapping out the routes, take care to avoid sharp angles and ensure athletes are able to travel in one direction as they pass through the space. To help reinforce these paths, consider using a combination of delineation equipment (delineators, cones, barricades, etc.), signage, and volunteer marshals.

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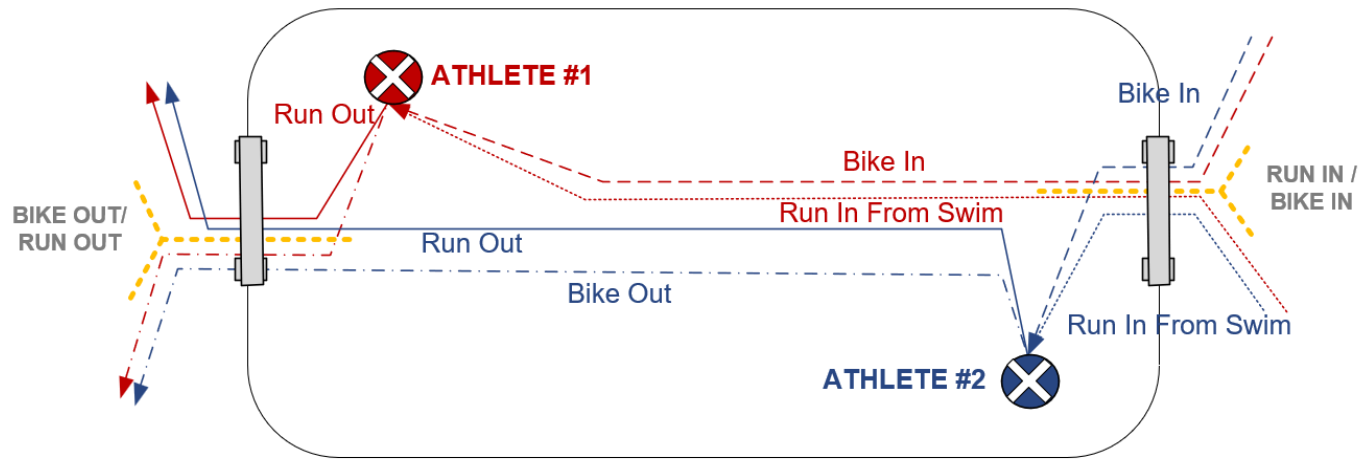
Equal Distance: The Transition Area should be designed to ensure that regardless of where athletes are racked within the space, they run an equal distance. The biggest factor here is the location of the entrance and exit points for each leg of the race. The shape of the area and the configuration of existing or temporary fencing (i.e. fencing, gate openings, etc) will dictate how creative you need to be to create a fair and equal flow.

DID YOU KNOW?
As an additional way to promote fairness, athletes racing against each other within the same competition category (i.e. age group) are all typically racked together. This minimizes potential advantages and keeps course conditions constant

In the diagrams outlined below, Example A has access points on opposite ends of the Transition area, which naturally balances out the distances traveled by participants with and without their bikes. The setup of Example B with access points on the same side of the area requires more intervention to build out lanes that maintain fairness for the full participant field.

EQUAL DISTANCE

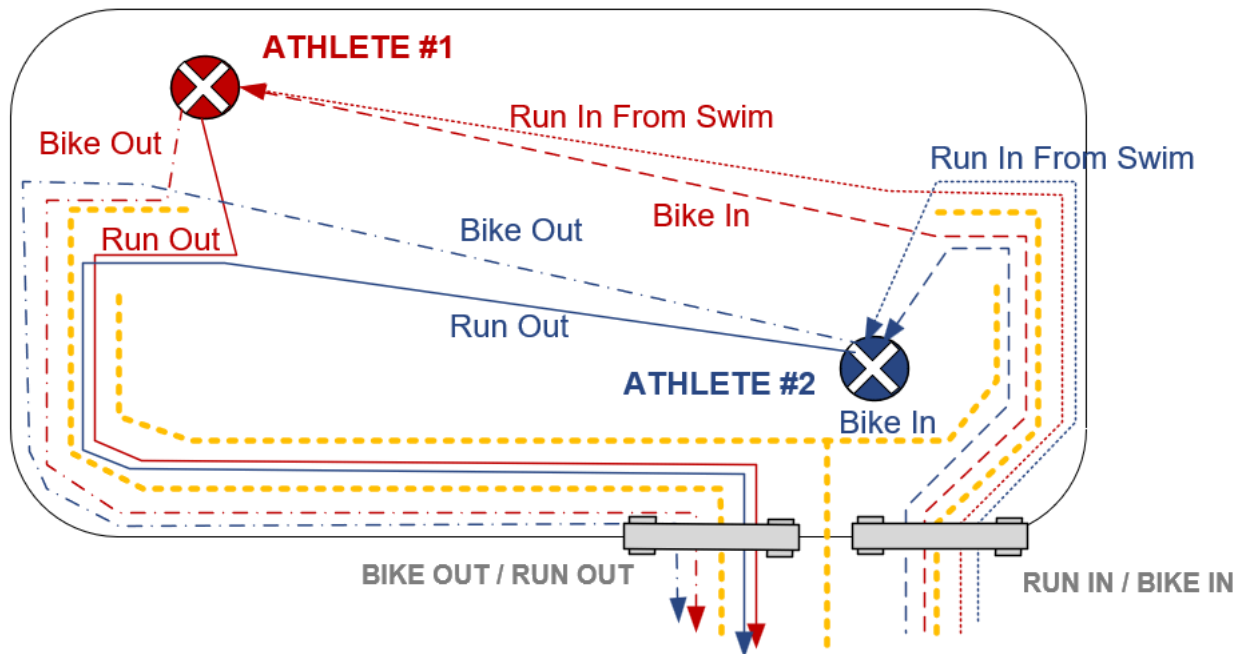
EXAMPLE A: This diagram portrays the quintessential Transition Area setup where the Run in/Bike In and Bike Out/Run Out access points exist on opposite ends of the footprint.



In this scenario, the total distance athletes will run inside Transition will naturally even out, regardless of where they are racked. For example, Athlete #1 experiences a longer run in from swim, balanced by a shorter run out and a longer bike in, balanced by a shorter bike out. For Athlete #2, who is racked on the other end of Transition, will run the same distance with and without their bike.

EQUAL DISTANCE

EXAMPLE B: In this diagram, the existing fence and gate openings within the Transition area necessitate that both the Run In/Bike In and the Bike Out/Run Out exist on the same side of the footprint.



The Transition setup above which contains both the Run In/Bike In and Bike Out/Run Out on the same side provides Athlete #2 with a clear advantage. If allowed to run directly from the entrance to their rack, and vice versa, their total distance traveled inside Transition would be significantly less than Athlete #1 who has a longer distance to the entrance/exits each time they move to a new leg of the race. To balance the scales, flow lanes can be created using delineation equipment, as outlined by the orange lines in the diagram above. The creation of lanes manufactures a flow that mimics that of Example A to ensure the total distances run by Athletes #1 and #2 within Transition will balance out. Ultimately, you want to ensure that all participants are running the same distances with and without their bike.

3 Bike Racks: The use of bike racks in Transition helps create an organized and efficient system for participants to locate their equipment quickly. Assigning athlete race numbers to racking areas allows designated waves of athletes to remain together, preventing a free-for-all.

- **Numbered Aisles:** Affix signs to the end of each aisle for the athlete number ranges that should rack within that row.



- **Numbered Rack Positions:** In addition to the aisle signs, each individual racking position can be assigned a specific number to provide a precise location for each athlete to stage their equipment.
- **Open Racking within an Age Group:** This system allocates areas within Transition for certain age groups. For example, if you know there will be a maximum of 100 athletes in Male 20-24, you would create racking stickers that say “M 20-24” for each position where these athletes are able to rack. This type of system is beneficial if you have multiple events happening throughout race weekend. This allows the race to issue athletes only one number for the duration of the event without having to sticker and re-sticker transition multiple times.

Prior to the event, you will need to decide the strategy for how Transition will be numbered and organized. Update your signage and staffing plans accordingly to ensure you have the supplies and manpower to execute on-site. Here are a few factors to consider when making this decision:

EVENT SIZE	LAYOUT COMPLEXITY	ATHLETE EXPERIENCE
<p>For triathlons with a large participant field, numbering both the aisles and racks may be beneficial to help athletes quickly locate their positions. Assigning rack numbers also provides you with control of setting consistent spacing for all racks, which generally allows you to fit more bikes per rack than if athletes are given the freedom to select their own locations.</p>	<p>If the Transition area layout is complex and potentially confusing to navigate, numbering rack positions may help to enhance organization. If the area is relatively small and straightforward, numbering aisles alone may be sufficient.</p>	<p>Consider the athlete experience. The goal is to make the transition process as smooth and stress-free as possible. If numbering the rack positions enhances clarity for athletes it may be worthwhile. For events with elite athletes, prize money, or other premium entries, more precise positions becomes more critical to minimize any potential issues.</p>

When assigning numbers to rack areas, consider the flow of how transition will fill and empty. As a general rule of thumb, the first waves coming in from the water should be the furthest away from the swim in and work their way closer.

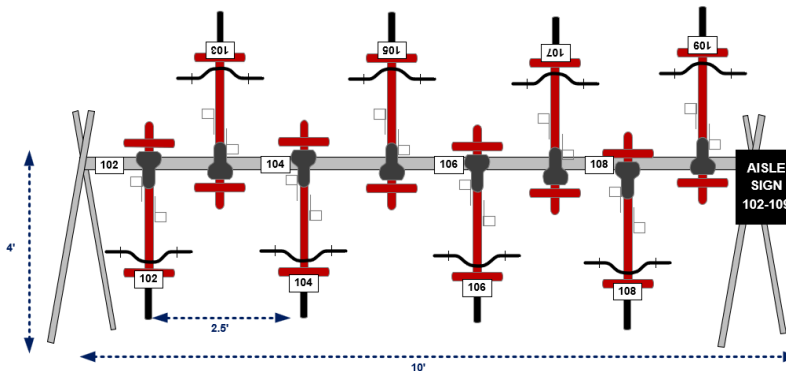
BIKE RACKS: BY THE NUMBERS

- 10ft (length) x 4ft (height)**
 Standard Bike Rack Dimensions
- 2.5ft of Rack Space**
 Space allocation per athlete per side
 $2.5\text{ft per athlete} \times 4\text{ athletes per side} = 10\text{ft}$
 $4\text{ athletes per side} \times 2\text{ sides} = 8\text{ athletes per rack}$
- 15ft of Aisle Space**
 Space between parallel bike racks



Athletes should rack their bike by the saddle. The front tire should be facing the same direction as the number label on the bike rack

Bike Rack numbers should alternate on each side of the rack. In short, one side of the rack will be all even numbers and the other side of the rack will be all odd numbers.



Timing Wires/Mats: As you map out the Transition layout consult with your race timer on the location of timing mats/wires. Timing reads should be collected at all (4) access points: Run in from the Swim, Bike Out, Bike In, and Run Out. These data points ensure the accurate recording of split times for each leg of the course and also provide athletes with information about how much time was spent in Transition during T1 and T2.

AMENITIES:

Transition will serve as the home base for athletes during the event. While athletes are responsible for bringing in the supplies they might need during the race, you can take steps to outfit the area with amenities to create a smoother experience.



- **Toilets:** It is critical that athletes have access to restroom facilities during the event. If portable toilets are being used, plan to arrange toilets in clusters throughout the Transition area to avoid congestion and distribute the flow of participants. Placing them at different points ensures that athletes have convenient access without causing bottlenecks.

Pro Tip:

For races with adaptive divisions and/or elite athletes, consider having designated facilities for these groups. Adaptive toilets should be ADA-compliant. Consider adding signage that can be affixed to the doors that specify “ADAPTIVE ATHLETES ONLY” and/or “ELITES ONLY” to help ensure these restrooms are not inadvertently overtaken by Age Group athletes and are available only to those athletes who truly need them.

- **Basins/Showers:** When athletes exit the swim, they will run barefoot to the Transition area. Consider setting up basins or shallow pools of water near the Transition entrance where athletes will run in from the swim. These basins allow athletes to rinse off sand, saltwater, and debris from their feet before putting on their cycling socks and shoes. For races where athletes are swimming in saltwater or are likely to be covered in silt and sand when they exit the water, overhead showers or spray stations allow them to rinse for a more comfortable experience heading onto the bike course.
- **Aid Station/Water Bottle Refill:** If possible, consider hosting an aid station and/or bottle refill station inside the Transition Area where athletes can refuel before they head out on their next leg of the course.
- **Bike Mechanics:** While mechanics are not required, they are a nice customer service touch point to offer during bike check-in, prior to the race start, and while the event is live. They can assist athletes with last-minute adjustments and provide technical support for minor repairs.
- **Medical Support:** It is best practice to have a medical presence in the Transition area to be able to provide athletes with basic first aid support (i.e. bandaids, ice, etc) and to be able to respond to critical incidents with treatment and/or transport. Prior to the event, establish the emergency egress route that will be used should a transport situation arise.
- **Athlete Services:** It is possible athletes may show up to race morning missing critical items needed to begin the race. Prepare a plan for staff/volunteers to be available to provide customer service support with the following supplies:

DID YOU KNOW?

For USAT Sanctioned events, all athlete bicycle bar ends must be solidly plugged. Bar end plugs must be provided to athletes. If you have a bike support partner, consult with them about having plugs available for athletes if needed



ATHLETE ITEMS

It is common for athletes to forget or misplace their timing chips/straps, race bibs and safety pins. Have an extra supply of these items available on-site and a designated place to direct athletes in need of assistance.

BODY MARKING

Body Marking is a crucial tool for athlete identification and rules enforcement. Have a supply of thick black markers or temporary tattoos available in Transition for athletes to get body marked.

- **Volunteers:** Volunteers play an important role in ensuring a smooth flow of athletes through the transition area. They provide the directional support that helps to prevent athlete confusion and potential crossover issues.

Pro Tip:

For more information on how to train your Transition Volunteers, check out this resource: [USA Triathlon Transition Volunteer Instructional Video](#)

TIMELINE:

Clearly communicate to athletes prior to the event when they will be able to access the Transition area before, during, and after the race:

- **Bike Check-In:** Depending on the size, scale, and complexity of the event, some races mandate that athletes check their bikes into Transition the day prior to the race. This allows the process to be stretched over a longer period, helping to spread out crowd flow in and around the area. Alternatively, if all athletes need to rack their bikes on race morning prior to the start, the timeline will likely be more condensed, resulting in a greater risk of congestion and delays.

SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS

- If Bike Check-In occurs the day prior to the event, the race is responsible for keeping all athlete equipment safe and secure overnight. Ample security, lighting, and fencing are all necessary. Evaluate the surroundings of the Transition area and work with private security and/or law enforcement to identify and mitigate risks.
- To maintain the integrity of a secure Transition area, it is important only registered athletes, assigned volunteers, and race management are permitted to enter the space from the time Bike Check-In begins until the last bike is removed post-event. To effectively enforce these restrictions athletes must be easily identifiable via wristbands, bib numbers, temporary tattoos, etc. All bikes entering the area should also be labeled with bike frame numbers. Volunteers and staff should have distinct apparel and/or credentials that indicate their permitted access.
- In addition to their bikes, most athletes will enter Transition with a bag of gear and equipment that is left unattended at their rack at check-in. Depending on the size, scale, and location of the event, local law enforcement may mandate security checkpoints at the Transition entrance(s) where bags can be checked by explosive device K9s and/or magnetometers. Some races have implemented clear plastic bag policies where all equipment entering the area must be placed inside clear bags as opposed to personally owned bags or backpacks.

- Athletes will need to pick up their race packets prior to being allowed to enter transition and for them to be able to label/rack their bikes. Ensure that the timelines for packet pick-up and bike check-in allow for athletes to move sequentially from step one to step two.
- While Bike Check-In is open, it is best practice for the Transition area to be show ready to resemble how it will look when the race is live. To the extent that it is possible, set up directional signage and delineation lanes to provide athletes with a visual of the race flow. Many athletes will use Bike Check-In as an opportunity to walk-through the area to ensure they understand where they will be coming and going during each leg of the race.
- For Transition areas that are particularly complicated, consider implementing Transition Tours during Bike Check-In, where experienced volunteers are able to walk athletes through the flow and provide any insider tips and tricks to navigate the space.

SETUP CONSIDERATIONS

- **Race Morning:** In situations where bike check-in is required the day before the race, it is still customary for Transition to open race morning prior to the start to allow athletes to bring in additional equipment (i.e. cold water bottles, dry sneakers, towel, etc.). Set designated timeframes that athletes will be able to access the area. Athletes should be instructed to vacate

Transition prior to their race start time. Note that if the event has multiple race distances, these access timeframes for athletes in each race may differ. Have a plan to maintain ample separation between racing athletes and those who may be in Transition prepping for a later race.

Pro Tip:

It is best practice to outfit the Transition area with a power source, amplified sound, and an emcee. Prepare a script for the emcee that outlines last-minute race reminders and helps to enforce the Transition access timeline. This is a crucial crowd management piece to be able to provide instruction that encourages athletes to complete their Transition preparations and proceed to the race start in an orderly fashion according to the established schedule.

- **Bike Check-Out:** Once athletes cross the finish line, they will eagerly await the chance to return to Transition to collect their bike and the rest of their belongings. To prevent any potential interference with athletes still racing, finishers should not be permitted to re-enter Transition until the last athletes have returned from the bike course and have made their way onto the run course. Be aware that finishers may begin to congregate around the entrance as they await the go-ahead to enter. Ensure that Transition staff and volunteers are in a position to control any potential crowds and maintain a clear and safe path for runners still heading out on the course.

Also communicate an end time for Bike Check-Out to encourage athletes to collect their bikes in a timely manner, which will allow your race crew to begin to break down the area according to the established schedule.

**SECURITY
CONSIDERATIONS**

- During Bike Check-Out, ensure there is a system in place at the exit point(s) for race management or security to check that an athlete's race number on their wristband/bib number matches the number on the bike frame. This checkpoint prevents an athlete walking away with a bike that doesn't belong to them.
- If there are bikes/belongings that still remain in the Transition area after Bike Check-Out concludes, collect the items and keep them in a safe location. It is possible an athlete mistakenly left items behind. It is also possible that the equipment belongs to athletes involved in a medical incidents that are unable to return to Transition that day. Where possible, reach out to athletes to coordinate an alternate time for them to collect their items.



SWIM ACCOUNTABILITY:

As the swim portion of the event draws to a close and the last athletes make their way to Transition, a joint effort begins by the swim staff, transition staff, and the timing team to confirm all swimmers that entered the water have also exited the water. Swim safety assets should not be released until all swimmers have been accounted for.

SWIM STAFF	TIMING TEAM	TRANSITION STAFF
<p>Swim staff and safety assets sweep the water to ensure that no athletes remain on the course. All timing chips collected at the swim extraction point should be called into the Command Center, recorded, and shared with the timing team.</p>	<p>The timing team compares the data from the timing mats at the start vs. the timing mats at the finish to create a list of any athlete numbers that have not crossed the exit mat. Any DNFs that have been called in from the swim extraction point are crossed off the list as their location and status is known. If there are any numbers still remaining, these athletes must be located.</p>	<p>In theory, once all athletes have exited the swim and made their way out on the bike course, all bike racks in Transition should be empty. Transition staff should walk the area and record the race numbers of any bikes that still remain and work closely with the timing team to track the athletes' movements.</p>

Often, it can take a bit of detective work to piece together the whereabouts of an athlete. It is important to remain calm and methodically work through all possible scenarios:

- No-Show:** An athlete's bike will be sitting in Transition untouched if they do not show up on race morning. It means they checked their bike into Transition with the intention of racing, but for whatever reason they did not start the event. Perhaps they overslept, woke up sick, or got cold feet. When the timer compares this number against the start data, it will show they never entered the water. Once this has been confirmed, this athlete is considered accounted for and is no longer a cause for concern.
- DNF (Did Not Finish):** An athlete's bike will remain in Transition if they were removed from the swim course. Timing chips should be collected from any athletes extracted from the swim, for both medical and non-medical issues. They should be called into Command, recorded, and shared with the timing team. Since their whereabouts are known, this is no longer cause for concern.
- Speed Demon:** An athlete's bike is in Transition because they are fast! They have already completed the bike course and have started out on the run. Check by their rack to see if their running shoes are still there. Check Run Out timing data and any other mats along the run course to prove they have exited the water and are out on the course.
- Timing Chip Malfunction:** If an athlete entered the water, but a timing read is not showing at the exit, the Transition staff should be sent to this athlete's rack in Transition. If their bike and helmet are no longer there in transition this is an indication they have started the bike course.



The absence of a read at the swim exit likely means that their chip fell off in the water or is malfunctioning.

5. **Cause for Concern:** If an athlete has a timing read at the swim start but not the exit, they are not on a DNF list, AND all their cycling equipment remains in the Transition area this is a potential cause for concern as the whereabouts of this athlete is unknown. Here is a recommended series of next steps:
 - a. Check with on-site Medical / Safety Personnel: Confirm with medical and swim safety personnel that no other DNF timing chips remain unrecorded. During the hustle and bustle of an extraction, timing chips may end up in a person's pocket or backpack. Do a full sweep of the area to ensure all have been accounted for.
 - b. Contact the Athlete: Reach out to the cell phone number the athlete has provided. It is possible they have removed themselves from the race but did not turn in their timing chip.
 - c. Contact the Athlete's Emergency Contact: Confirm that the athlete did, in fact, start the race. Remain calm and take care not to alarm the athlete's friends/family members. Assign a staff member to remain with the family as the situation develops.
 - d. Alert Swim Safety Assets and Agency Governing the Body of Water: If all signs indicate the athlete may still be in the water, alert the swim safety assets to do a full sweep of the area and reach out to the agency governing the body of water. Rescue divers should be deployed to be able to look under the surface of the water. The US Coast Guard can be reached on Channels 16 and 23 to report the incident, share the location, and request emergency assistance for a rescue effort.

SPLIT TRANSITION AREAS:


Up to this point, we have focused on races that have a singular transition area, which serves as the home for both T1 and T2. However, in some instances, the course route may necessitate two separate Transition areas. The need for two transition areas typically arises in longer-distance races, particularly those that are point-to-point, where the swim, bike, and run segments do not start and finish at the same location.

Split transition areas add an extra layer of operational logistics that can require the set up of additional equipment (i.e. bike racks, signage), deployment of multiple volunteer groups, and in some cases, the transport of athletes and/or their belongings between areas pre/post race. The successful execution of split transitions is rooted in the race's organization and the ability to effectively communicate the process for how, where, and when an athlete's gear should be packed, dropped off, and picked up at the event.

No matter how well the logistics plans are communicated prior to the event, it is inevitable that athletes and or equipment may end up in the wrong place at the wrong time. Proactively make contingency plans for how you will transport equipment should it be necessary to shift items between venues.

RACE SPOTLIGHT

There are several Ironman races that have a split transition area format. Below are some of the methods used by Ironman race organizers to provide structure to the process. Equally as important as the logistics themselves is the communication to athletes about what they can expect for race day. Ironman has publicly shared this athlete resource: [Pro Tips for Tackling a Split Transition Race](#)

HOW	WHERE	WHEN
<p>Athletes are provided with (3) color-coded bags at packet pick-up:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Morning Clothes Bag 2. Bike Gear Bag 3. Run Gear Bag 	<p>Clearly articulate which equipment should be staged in which location:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Morning Clothes: Athletes typically hand off morning clothes bags at the start and these are made available to them post-race at the finish 2. Staged in T1 to be available for athletes as they transition from the swim to the run 3. Staged in T2 to be available for athletes as they transition from the bike to the run 	<p>Map out the timeline for when equipment is able to be dropped off and picked up.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T1 Bike Check-In: When do athletes need to rack their bikes? • T2 Run Gear Drop-Off: When do athletes need to drop off their run gear bags? • T1 Equipment Pick-Up: Post-Race, athletes will need to retrieve their items from the swim (i.e. wetsuits and goggles) • T2 Equipment Pick-Up: Post-Race, athletes will need to retrieve their bikes from T2.



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