

Just The Basics – 13 – Making the Jump

Now you have read these little articles over and you are thinking, “You know, taking this sports car out and exploring a bit of what the good Dr. Porsche had in mind when they designed it sounds like fun, but...”

But what about...?

Voiding my warranty? As long as you are doing Driver Education, and not racing, you are good. If you are driving something other than a Porsche, check with the dealer or manufacturer.

Insurance? Many policies will cover Driver Education events as long as there is no ‘racing’. There is special insurance available for track day events. Cost is around \$150-\$200 for the weekend. See the Driver Education tab for more info and links.

Ruining tires? They will get a bit more wear than normal, but nothing very noticeable. A 12,000 mile tire might get 11,000 - 11,500. If you have a *huge* slide, you may have trashed them. I’ve only seen that once or twice.

Engine, transmission, suspension? All of these components were designed to be driven hard and fast. The only issue you may run into is if you accidentally select 3rd gear when you wanted 5th. That would be very damaging. But you could do that on the road as well. If you have neglected maintenance, you might want to have that corrected before hand.

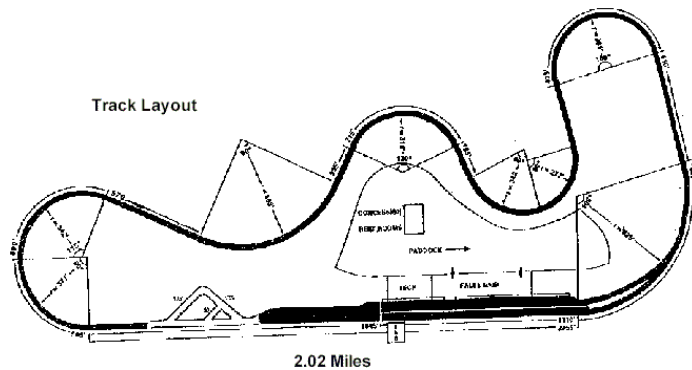
Clothes? You need natural fiber, comfortable clothes. Jeans, shorts and T shirts are fine. Rubber soled shoes. No open toed shoes.

Gas? You will not make it on Al Gore’s Friends list. You will likely see your fuel economy drop to high single or low double digits. There are 2 gas stations at the intersection of Rt. 80 & Ziegler Rd, less than 2 miles from the track. It is a good idea to fill up on your way to the track. A thirsty car or a car with 2 drivers may need to get gas at the lunch break, so watch your gas gage! You do not need special fuel like race gas. They have gas available at the track, including race fuel, at a significant premium over normal prices.

What about someone wrecking me? At the track, passing is only allowed in the front straight for beginners. Even then, the car in front **MUST** give a pass signal to the car behind and allow the pass to happen long before the braking or turning areas. The chances of someone running into you are virtually nil.

How fast will I go? A lot of that depends on your comfort level and your car. A twin turbo 911 will go faster than a base Boxster obviously. One thing you find out quickly is that top speed at the end of the straight is just a number. Now that number will be in excess of 100 mph with virtually any car. The real fun is trying to get the most speed through the turns. Your instructor will work with you in building your confidence. You will see a marked improvement on Sunday over Saturday, I guarantee it!





What if I wreck myself?

Roebing Road is a fast and very safe track. However bad things can and occasionally do happen. Listening to the instructor and using some common sense is the best advice I can give. The track reminds people of a 2 hump camel. The head of the camel is on the left and is known as turns 1 & 2. Turn 3 is the neck. Turn 4 is the first hump and 5 is the space between the humps.

Turns 6 & 7 are the second hump and the rear of the camel is turns 8 & 9. The underbelly is the front straight. There are plenty of runoff areas all around the track. Should you lose control of your car and go off track, it will likely be in need of a bath and an interior vacuum afterwards, but that is about all.

There is one big exception. Turn 9.

The pit lane is on the inside of the front straight. There is a 3 foot wall down the entire pit area separating the pits from the track. If you mess up turn 9, you must go off track on the outside. There is enough space to fit 3 or 4 football fields and there is plenty of time and space to slow down. If you try to be a hero and recover, odds are you will hit the pit wall head on. Your instructor will try to prevent that from happening. Your instructor doesn't want to hit pit wall either. They will cover this, in detail, in the classroom.

My instructor? You will be assigned a PCA trained instructor who will ride with you the entire time you are on the track. It is his or her job to teach you the proper lines, keep you out of trouble, and make sure you have a fantastic time. Instructors have 2 way communicators, so you can talk to each other in normal speaking voices. Many are fellow Coastal Empire Region members and others come from other regions or organizations. You will also have to attend a few classroom sessions with the other novices, where many things will be explained and questions answered.

I don't know. I've never done anything like this before. There will be about 20-25 people there who have never done this type of thing either. You will not be alone. Everyone has to start somewhere. The good thing is that everyone remembers their first time out and they are willing to make you feel comfortable. As Paul Newman once said, "The difference between racing and doing drugs is you do not have the regret the next day." We love this and welcome fellow junkies to our world of speed.



OK, I'm game. What is next?

I mentioned the weekends agenda on the first topic. You have to first sign up at www.clubregistration.net. Download the tech form. You need to have your car checked over and signed off by a mechanic within 2 weeks of the event. Porsche of Hilton Head and Bob Woodman Tires do this for *free*. You will need to pick a number. Use blue painters tape on the doors or white shoe polish on the rear windows. (Someone usually has some at the track if you don't have any.) Be sure to sign up for a loaner helmet when you register.

Get ready for some fun!