

Oregon Trail Gravel- Race Rules & Policies, 2026

The Oregon Trail Gravel Bike Race is designed to capture the spirit of adventure, challenge of self-reliance, and joy of endurance that define gravel riding. These rules have been established to ensure a fair, safe, and enjoyable experience for all participants as they traverse diverse terrain, from rugged forest roads to fast, open gravel, along a route inspired by the historic pioneer journey.

Riders are expected to understand and follow the guidelines outlined in this document, to respect fellow competitors and the environment, and to embody the camaraderie and resilience that make gravel racing unique. Whether you're here to chase the podium or enjoy the journey, these rules will help keep the Oregon Trail experience authentic, competitive, and safe for everyone.

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1. General Rules- We rely on all riders to race respectfully and honestly throughout the week. This is both a competition and a ride. But most importantly, this is all for fun!

1. The Main Rules:

- a. Be nice.
- b. Stop at all stop signs.
- c. Pick up your trash and be respectful of the land and trail.
- d. Stay on the right side of the roads always, whether there is a center road line or not.
- e. Always follow the rules of the road, unless otherwise noted.

2. Expanded Rules for Event:

- a. **Mandatory Rider Meeting-** We will have a **mandatory rider meeting** each day at 15 minutes before the ceremonial start from camp.
- b. **Cutting Course Disqualification-** If any rider is caught cutting the courses or impeding other riders, they will be disqualified and sent home immediately. These are mats placed along the route to track riders and ensure no one cuts the course. The rider will be banned from all future Breakaway Promotions events.
- c. **Neutral Section-** Each day will have a Ceremonial Start and a Ceremonial Finish. These are neutral sections. There will be a Timing Start and a Timing Finish. Riders are required to ride all neutral sections. Failure to complete the neutral section will result in a DNF for the stage.
- d. **Earbuds/Headphones-** Earbuds/headphones are allowed to be in the right side ear (non-passing side) only when on a gravel road. No earbuds/headphones on any asphalt road. Rider **MUST** be aware of the environment and may be told to remove earbud/headphone if it is deemed to impede with ability to hear race officials, other riders, traffic, etc. **Do we allow in one ear?**
- e. **Bib Numbers & Number Plates-** Bib numbers are to be worn on the right side of the jersey for all stages. Number plates must be attached to the front of the bike so that the number is visible.
- f. **Rides to Finish-** If, for any reason, a rider receives a ride to the finish of a stage, they will no longer be in the race competition. A rider may start the following day and continue to participate in the event, but will not receive an overall time or place. At this point, the rider is bike touring.
- g. **Pro Category Starts & Drafting-** We follow the Gravel Earth Series rule of Independent Starts for Pro Men and Women to ensure equal conditions and opportunities. Pro Women cannot draft behind any category of men; they must compete among themselves. See the later section for more details on drafting.
- h. **Rider Age-** Minimum rider age is 16. Riders 16–17 must be accompanied by an adult during the rides.
- i. **NO AERO-BARS ALLOWED-** For the safety of the rider and all participants, aero-bars are not allowed at any of the Breakaway Promotions cycling events.

2. Scoring, Podiums, & Overall Awards- The Pioneer Pro and Open categories are the only categories eligible for podiums and awards. Settler distance is meant to be an adventurous, challenging ride and not a race. Settler, Iron-Horse, and Tag Team are not part of the competitive categories.

- 1. Scoring-** The Pioneer category is scored as a Cumulative General Classification (GC) score, meaning each day, a rider's time for the current stage is added to their total time from previous stages. The overall winner with the lowest accumulated time at the end of all stages wins the race. All other categories will post daily results and an overall GC, but not have a podium or awards.
- 2. Podiums-** Only the Pioneer category is eligible for nightly and overall podiums. The top three riders for the Pro Men, Pro Women, Non-Binary, and Men/Women in Junior, Open, Open Masters, and Open Masters+ Pioneer categories will be recognized each night. The current overall race leader will be presented with a leader's jersey.
- 3. Overall Awards-** Awards will be presented at the final stage for Pioneer in the categories of Pro Men, Pro Women, Non-Binary, and Junior, Open, Masters, and Masters+ for Men and Women.

3. Race Starts

- 1. Start Times-** Start times may be adjusted depending on weather or other factors. We will make any updates to the start times during the podium the night before.
- 2. Mandatory Rider Meeting-** We will have a mandatory rider meeting each day at 15 minutes before the ceremonial start from camp.
- 3. Pro Race Start-** Pro starts will be in separate gender waves, except for the timetrail day. Pro Men will start five minutes before Pro Women start.
- 4. Open Race Start, Pioneer & Settler-** Unless otherwise designated, Open Pioneers and Settlers will start in the same wave. Open riders will start ten minutes after the Women's Pro start. If Settlers have a designated later race start than Pioneers, such as on Stage 1, all Settlers will start at the same time.
- 5. Timetrail Race Start-** Stage 3 is typically a time trial course. Settlers have the option to take Stage 3 as a rest day and not ride.
 - Riders will start in 1-minute increments.
 - Pioneer Pro riders will start first with the start order based on GC placing. Riders will be able to find their start number at the results booth the night before and the morning of Stage 3. All Pro Men will start, then all Pro Women before Open riders start.
 - Anyone being passed by a racer in another category must allow a clean pass at the first safe opportunity.

- d. Open Pioneer riders will start based on their overall GC placing for the top 50 riders, regardless of gender. After the top 50 start, riders will be able to seed themselves at the start.
 - e. Settler riders who wish to ride Stage 3 will start after all of the Pioneer riders have started, or there is an opening within the self-seeded Pioneers.
- 6. Early Start Options-** Early Starts are for those non-competitive riders who would like a little more time to finish the course.
- a. On some stages, there may be a pre-designated early start option. These will be noted in the official Rider Guide.
 - b. Riders in contention for podium spots are not allowed to start in the early start. If all riders in a podium category, ie, Women's Masters+, collectively decide to start at the early start time, they will be scored as normal.
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4. Bike Setup and Bike Alterations

- 1. **Consistent Bike-** The same bike must be ridden for the entirety of the event. Riders can switch out wheels, tires, gearing, and saddles in camp. While there will be a camp mechanic, it is recommended that riders know how to perform any swaps they choose to do.
 - 2. **Wheelset-** Each rider is allowed to bring one additional wheelset for their bike.
 - a. Wheelsets can be changed out at camp- they will not be available for changeout on the course.
 - b. Wheelsets are required to be in a box or wheelbag labeled with the rider's name and bib number. Wheelsets without a box or bag will not be transferred.
 - 3. **No Aerobars-** Aerobars are not allowed on any stage of the Oregon Trail Gravel or any of the Oregon Gravel Series events.
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5. Support, Aid Stations, On-Course Assistance

- 1. **Race Support-** Neutral support only. No team or outside on-course support is allowed except neutral race support (Team Breakaway mechanics), official aid stations, and the medical team.
- 2. **Rider's Support Crew-** Personal support personnel are not allowed on the course. Violation will lead to disqualification. This includes the official support team, as well as friends and family. The driver guide will note authorized locations where spectators may see their rider. Interference with course traffic outside of these locations will lead to disqualification.
- 3. **Mechanical Support-** Team Breakaway mechanics will be on course to assist riders; however, riders are expected to be somewhat self-sufficient: carry spare tubes, pump, tools, parts like a derailleur hanger, chain, batteries, etc. Specialized parts may not be stocked (ie, for Campagnolo drivetrains).

4. **Assistance From Other Riders**-Sharing water, food, and basic tools is allowed, but bikes or essential parts may not be exchanged for riders in podium contention.
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6. Racer Camping Policy- This policy is in place to maintain fairness and consistency between racers who camp (as part of the race experience) and those who opt for off-site accommodations. The policy aims to create equal opportunity by recognizing that off-site accommodations offer advantages over staying on-site.

1. **Lodging Definitions**

- a. Official Race Camping: Provided by the race organization at designated overnight sites, including the tent camping area, the premium tent package area, and the RV camping area.
- b. Off-site Lodging: Racer-arranged accommodations at hotels, motels, or private lodgings.
- c. Oregon Trail will NOT provide transportation of rider or gear to/from the race location to any off-site lodging.

2. **Off-Site Lodging Penalty**- To account for the advantages of off-site lodging:

- a. Racers staying off-site will receive a time deduction (penalty) applied to their finish time each day.
- b. Deduction Calculation: Fixed time penalty per stage: **5 minutes per stage for each night spent offsite.**

3. **Notification Requirement**

- a. Racers must declare they are choosing off-site lodging to race officials no later than two weeks before the race start.
- b. Unreported off-site lodging will result in disqualification.

4. **Enforcement**

- a. Race officials will apply deductions automatically after daily results are compiled.
 - b. Any disputes must be submitted to the timing and/or race officials within 24 hours of the results posting.
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7. Drafting- Any rider breaking any of the following drafting rules will be automatically disqualified.

1. **Definition:** Drafting is defined as riding close behind or beside another cyclist within the lead rider's draft zone to take advantage of reduced air resistance and gain speed. Drafting is done when a rider stays within the draft zone for more than 20 seconds.
 - a. Draft Zone- The draft zone is 10 meters (32 feet, 2.5 car lengths) from the front of the wheel of the cyclist ahead.

- b. Passing- A rider is allowed to enter another cyclist's draft zone when making a pass.
 - c. Time Limit- A rider must complete the pass within 20 seconds.
 - d. Blocking- Athletes must not ride in a way that prevents someone behind from passing based on how they are positioned.
 - e. Overtaking- After a rider has passed, the overtaken rider must drop back so they do not remain within the new lead rider's draft zone for more than 20 seconds.
- 2. Pro Field-** Drafting across genders for the Pro field is not allowed.
- a. Pro Men- Riders in the Pro Men category are only allowed to draft off of other men.
 - b. Pro Women- Riders in the Pro Women category are only allowed to draft off of other women.
 - c. Male riders of any field are not allowed to insert themselves into the Pro Women's pace group.
- 3. All Fields**
- a. Drafting behind any vehicle or bicycle not registered in the race is not allowed. This includes, but is not limited to, motor vehicles, motorcycles, lead/escort vehicles, medical ATVs, recreational off-road vehicles, farm equipment, ebikes, and other cyclists riding on the course.
 - b. Riders must maintain a minimum gap of 30 meters (approximately 100 feet) behind any motorized vehicle.
 - c. Passing race vehicles must be done only when safe and allowed. If a race vehicle is on course and riders need to get by, it is the responsibility of the race vehicle to give the right-of-way.
- 4. Enforcement-** Claims against a rider may be brought up by race directors/race officials, or another rider.
- a. If another rider witnesses drafting, they must present valid evidence, such as a video recording, picture, and/or multiple other riders backing the claim.
 - b. Claim Review Period - Race officials will review all claims, notify the rider facing the claim, and make a final decision within 24 hours.
 - c. Rider facing the claim will be allowed to present argument/evidence in their defense during the claim review period.
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8. DNF/DNS of Stages & Switching Categories

1. DNF/DNS of Stages-

- a. Did Not Finish (DNF)- If, for any reason, a rider receives a ride to the finish of a stage, they will no longer be in the race competition. A rider may start the following day and continue to participate in the event, but will not receive an overall time or place. At this point, the rider is bike touring. We will have an on-course sweep vehicle for any riders who are unable to finish the stage.

- b. **Did Not Start (DNS)**- If a rider is unable to start a stage, they will need a ride to the next campsite. Breakaway Promotions will do their best to arrange a ride; however, it is not guaranteed.
 - c. **Scoring**- Riders who DNF or DNS will not have a time listed for the stage they do not start/finish. Overall GC results will list riders as,
 - i. **Settled**- Those who did not finish at least one stage but stayed through the end of the event.
 - ii. **Died of Dystenery**- Those who decided to leave before the end of the event.
 2. **Pioneer to Settler**- Should a rider start as a Pioneer and decide mid-race to switch to the Settler course, they may do so at any time. Riders are required to notify the crew of E8 Timing of this decision. Rider's current time will continue to be added to the overall time as a Settler.
 3. **Settler to Pioneer**- Riders may not go from a Settler category up to the Pioneer at any point and still continue to be scored in the race. Riders may do so simply to ride, but will no longer be in the race competition. Ironhorse must remain as Ironhorse throughout.
 4. **Changing to Pro to Open/Masters/Masters+**- A rider may change their race category from pro race; however will no longer be podium eligible or overall scored within the new category.
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9. Camp Rules- We are very lucky to be welcomed into some fantastic communities. Participants must adhere to the following rules during camp. The most important thing is to respect the facilities and grounds of our campsites. Any participant not respect the area has the potential to be disqualified from the event.

1. **Facilities Usage**- Usage of facilities is only for registered participants, those with an RV Driver Pass, or a Non-rider Meal Pass.
2. **Food Line Policy**
 - a. Be respectful of the chefs and other riders. Do your best not to overload your plate and therefore waste food you are not going to eat.
 - b. Seconds will be allowed after everyone has been fed, and if there is food left over. This will be signified by the ringing of the final dinner bell.
3. **Guests**- Guests must register with the event team and purchase a meal ticket if needed. Family or friends who are not part of the race and not signed up for a meal plan are absolutely NOT allowed to get food, drinks, use the snack shack or use the restroom and shower facilities. Rider will be disqualified and required to leave camp if a family or friend is caught doing this.
4. **Noise**- Quiet time will be from 9 pm to 7 am. Please be respectful of other campers and keep noise to a minimum. No generators after 9 pm or before 8 am.
5. **Dogs**- Dogs must be leashed and supervised AT ALL TIMES for the safety of the entire team. If a dog is allowed to free roam, their owner will be removed from

the competition. We love dogs but want to make sure our riders, spectators, and the dogs remain safe.

10. Rules Enforcement, Penalties, Disqualification, & Claims Against a Rider

1. **Breakaway Promotions reserves the right to remove any rider from the event deemed unsportsmanlike.** The removed rider must leave the venue immediately. No refunds or credits will be given for any removed or disqualified rider.
2. **Rules Enforcement-** Any breach of rules or unsportsmanlike conduct may result in penalties or disqualification.
3. **Penalties-** A time penalty may be added to a rider's stage or overall time if deemed by race officials.
4. **Disqualification-** If a rider is disqualified, they may be asked to leave the event and camp location immediately. In some cases, a disqualified rider may be allowed to stay on site and even ride subsequent stages if allowed by the Race Director.
5. **Claims-** Claims against a rider may be brought up by race directors or another rider.
 - a. If another rider submits a claim, they must present valid evidence with their claim.
 - b. **Claim Review Period-** Race officials will review all claims, notify the rider facing the claim, and make a final decision within 24 hours.
 - c. Rider facing the claim will be allowed to present evidence in protest during the claim review period.