

Triathlon Race Day Checklist

Everything You Need for a Calm, Confident Start Line

Coach Joy - USAT Level I Triathlon Coach - UESCA Running Coach - NASM Certified Personal Trainer - NASM Mental Toughness Certified

Race day should not be the first time you are thinking about equipment, nutrition, pacing, or logistics. A great race starts with preparation. Use this checklist to help organize your gear, simplify your morning, and arrive at the start line confident and ready to execute your plan. **Read the race rules in advance.**

THE NIGHT BEFORE

Gear Preparation

- ☐ Triathlon kit / race outfit
- ☐ Race bib number (if provided)
- ☐ Timing chip
- ☐ Watch charged and ready
- ☐ Sunglasses
- ☐ Helmet
- ☐ Cycling shoes
- ☐ Running shoes
- ☐ Socks (if wearing them)
- ☐ Hat/visor
- ☐ Race belt
- ☐ Goggles
- ☐ Swim cap
- ☐ Towel for transition
- ☐ Flip flops/sandals for walking around transition
- ☐ Nutrition for bike and run
- ☐ Water bottles/hydration system prepared
- ☐ Flat kit: spare tube(s), CO2 cartridge(s) or pump, tire levers, multitool
- ☐ Body glide/chafing prevention
- ☐ Sunscreen
- ☐ Extra clothing for before/after race

Bike Preparation

- ☐ Bike inspected and ready
- ☐ Tires inflated appropriately
- ☐ Brakes checked

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- ☐ Gears shifting properly
- ☐ Computer/watch synced
- ☐ Water bottles mounted
- ☐ Nutrition attached and organized
- ☐ Bike placed in correct gear for race start

COACH TIP

Do not make major equipment changes the day before a race. Race day is for execution, not experimentation.

RACE MORNING

Before Leaving Your Hotel/Home

- ☐ Eat your normal pre-race breakfast
- ☐ Hydrate early
- ☐ Apply sunscreen
- ☐ Apply body glide/chafing prevention
- ☐ Confirm race schedule and transition closing time
- ☐ Leave enough time for parking, walking, and setup

Remember: A calm athlete makes better decisions.

TRANSITION SETUP

Swim-to-Bike (T1)

- ☐ Helmet placed with straps open
- ☐ Bike shoes positioned correctly
- ☐ Socks and gloves ready (if wearing)
- ☐ Sunglasses inside helmet
- ☐ Nutrition secured
- ☐ Towel placed where needed - useful for wiping off your feet before putting on shoes

Bike-to-Run (T2)

- ☐ Running shoes ready

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- ☐ Race belt positioned - closed so you can step into it and lift to your waist
- ☐ Hat/visor ready
- ☐ Any run nutrition/hydration prepared

BEFORE THE SWIM START

- ☐ Complete swim warm-up if available
- ☐ Check water conditions
- ☐ Confirm swim course buoys and direction
- ☐ Review pacing plan
- ☐ Take a few calm breaths
- ☐ Remember your training has prepared you for this moment

COACH TIP

The first few minutes of the swim should feel controlled. Do not let race adrenaline dictate your pace.

DURING THE RACE

Swim

- ☐ Start controlled
- ☐ Find your rhythm
- ☐ Focus on relaxed breathing
- ☐ Stay mentally composed if contact occurs

Bike

- ☐ Avoid starting too hard
- ☐ Settle into planned effort
- ☐ Fuel consistently
- ☐ Drink according to plan
- ☐ Stay within yourself for the run ahead

Run

- ☐ Start conservatively

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- ☐ Focus on cadence, form, and relaxed upper body
- ☐ Follow your nutrition plan
- ☐ Break the race into manageable sections
- ☐ Headphones/music not usually permitted - check your race rules
- ☐ Trust your preparation
- ☐ Stay positive and smile often

POST-RACE

- ☐ Retrieve bike and gear
- ☐ Eat and hydrate
- ☐ Change into comfortable clothing
- ☐ Celebrate your accomplishment

Record race notes while memories are fresh:

What went well? _____

What challenged you? _____

What would you improve next time? _____

FINAL RACE-DAY REMINDER

You do not need a perfect race. You need a well-prepared race. Control what you can: your preparation, your attitude, your effort, your decisions. Then trust the work you have done.

Dream Bigger. Train Smarter. Enjoy the Journey.