

Your First Time Driver Ed Experience

You've decided to do your first Porsche Club Driver's Ed event. Now what? What do you have to do? Do you need special equipment? What do you have to bring? What should you expect?

Well, let's see if we can answer a few of those questions. First of all, Driver's Ed is not racing, it's Driver's Ed. Not quite like in high school but still, Driver's Ed. The purpose is not race preparation, to see how fast you can go or show what a great driver you are. The purpose is to have fun and learn how to safely and properly drive your Porsche and to learn it's capabilities through the assistance of qualified instructors. Look at it that way, approach it as a learning experience and have fun while you learn.

Now, what do you have to do? Select the event you want to attend from the news letter, from a Porsche Club friend or from the web page. Use the registration form supplied on the web page. Fill out all the sections (type written only) and mail it along with your registration fee as early as possible to the person accepting registrations. Part of filling out your registration form is listing your car number. Each car must have a number. There are a few ways to find numbers 1) call a sign company and have them make numbers out of vinyl 2) have magnetic numbers made (tape the leading edge so it will not blow off) 3) use racing tape to make the numbers on the side of your car. The numbers should be 8 inches high and 1 inch wide. The numbers should be placed on both doors and on the back of the vehicle.

Next you'll need a Tech Inspection Sheet. You can print one from the web page. Take your car to a certified Porsche mechanic to be inspected. The inspectors will check the general working order of your car from the headlights, brake lights, turn signals, security of battery and other under the hood parts, brake fluid, coolant level, break pads, tightness of suspension parts, and other safety related points.

Do you need special equipment? To participate in a Driver's Ed event you must wear a helmet. Long sleeved cotton shirt and cotton pants are recommended but not mandatory.

About the helmet, a Snell 2020 rating will be required. A full face is recommended but not mandatory.

What do you have to bring? The registration forms are completed and fees paid through clubregistration.net, the car is tech inspected, you have your helmet and cotton clothes, now what?

Now you need to prepare for a day at the track. You want to bring what you need but not haul a lot of extra stuff. Besides, there's only so much you can fit into a Porsche. So, what are some of the things you might need?

- directions to the track, check the web page for these
- Track map so you can get familiar with the track layout
- Note pad so you can write down notes from the instructor to improve from one session to the next
- helmet, don't forget it
- hat, for protection from the sun
- sunglasses
- sun screen
- Short Sleeve shirt to wear in-between runs
- Long sleeve shirt to wear for driving
- long cotton pants (like blue jeans) for driving
- Cooler with ice, plenty of drinks and lunch or snacks. there may be someplace to get lunch at the track or someplace close by, check the description of the event in the newsletter or the web page
- a small folding chair
- paper towels and window cleaner
- tire air pressure gauge, a better one has an actual gage and not just a sliding rule
- wrench to tighten wheel lug nuts, preferably a torque wrench

- your car tool kit, jack, etc.
- cotton towels
- shop rags
- Numbers for the side of the car
- Gasoline, be sure you have enough to complete the event. Some people don't like to carry the extra weight of a lot of gas but be sure you have enough so you don't run out. A half tank is usually not enough.
- a couple of quarts of oil
- air pump or an air tank (be sure you fill it)
- something to hold all this stuff, a plastic container with a snap on top is good for this. You can leave all of your track stuff in it, always have it handy and not have to worry about forgetting something. You may want two of them, one for your track stuff and another one to hold things you bring for yourself and the loose things you remove from the car such as things in the glove box, console, CD's etc.

What should you expect? Plan to arrive early, if the track opens at 7:00am, be there at 7:00am. Don't get there just in time for the drivers meeting and expect to get things set up and organized before your run group or corner working session.

When you arrive at the track gate you must sign an insurance waiver for the track and for PCA

Proceed to the paddock area and find a place to park your car. Pick a place close by a friend who can give you pointers and help you as the day goes on.

Take all loose items out of your car. This means everything! Empty the glove box, the trunk, the door pockets, remove the radar detector, the cellular phone, CDs, floor mats anything loose. Place them in the plastic containers you brought to protect them from the elements. You may also want to remove the spare tire and jack to save a little more weight.

Put your car numbers on the car. If you have magnetic or sticky numbers place them on the doors and the back of the car. If you are using painters tape, put the numbers on the rear side windows on both sides of the car and make them as large as possible.

Check in at the registration table. There you will receive your registration package and a colored dot which indicates your run group.

You will then proceed to the track tech inspection. The tech inspection will consist of torquing the lugs, check to be sure there are no loose items in the car, both inside and under the hood. Checking the tie downs for the battery, checking for leaks, and checking the helmets for the proper SNELL rating as well as applying the proper run group sticker to your windshield.

Now, relax, check your oil, tire pressure, have a cup of coffee and socialize a bit.

There will be a driver's meeting prior to the event. At the meeting you will be given information about the track, any special considerations, how the flags are to be used, etc. If this is your first time at this track you will be assigned an instructor.

After the drivers meeting there may be a meeting for beginners and novices to further explain safety considerations and allow you to ask questions. Take this opportunity to ask about anything you don't understand.

Get with your instructor so he/she can talk the track with you and describe the track, entry and exit points for each turn, where to line up for each turn and other details to help you when you take your turn on the track.

Check the schedule; make sure you know when your group starts. Go to the bathroom, find your instructor and arrange when and where you will meet him/her.

Be sure to get to the grid area on time.

After you complete your run session be sure to properly cool down your car. Don't set your parking brake because really hot brakes may cause them to lock and not be able to be released.

