



Suncoast PCA Drivers Education (HPDE) at Sebring

A Guide for the Newbies!

We all remember the excitement, nerves and many questions involved with one's first track weekend, so hopefully this guide will lend a hand in preparing you for a great weekend!

WHAT IS HPDE??

HPDE is High Performance Drivers Education or DE for short. These events are non-competitive, untimed driving schools held on dedicated racetracks designed to teach Porsche owners proper high speed driving techniques.

You will be assigned a PCA instructor for in car instruction. At no time will you be out on the track on your own. You will start out as a novice student (Green group), progress to an advanced student (Blue group) and from there on to a White solo driver, then perhaps an advanced Black solo or an advanced Pink solo driver.

The amount of time any one driver spends in the Green novice group or the Blue advanced group will depend on a number of factors as each run group has specific requirements that must be met or exceeded in order for a driver to receive a promotion to a higher run group. This is applicable for all the run groups – regardless of experience level. Expect the progression to be at least a few weekends in each of the student groups.

Our on-track time is divided up by run groups and split equally between all the run groups, rotating throughout the day. A typical weekend will provide each run group with 4 x 30-minute sessions of on track time per day. Students also have mandatory classroom sessions each day that they are registered to drive.

We take a one-hour break for lunch at approximately mid-day. Bring your own lunch or purchase something from the onsite "Track Shack" restaurant kiosk. During the lunch break we offer slow speed parade laps behind a pace car. This is the ONLY time you may take passengers in your car on the track.



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Many participants will arrive the evening before the event (e.g., Thursday for 3-day events, Friday for 2-day events) and we can usually enter the track at, or before, 5 pm (this varies depending on who has rented the track for that day). The gate will then stay open for our participants 24/7 throughout the weekend. There are several hotels in the area, including Hotel Seven directly at the track. All overnight accommodation arrangements are your own responsibility. You may also bring your RV and camp at the track. Water and power are on a first come, first serve, basis. Power usage tags are a Sebring raceway fee and are available for purchase from the gate staff at time of track entry.

Generally, our 3-day weekend events have the student groups included on the schedule ONLY on the Saturday and on the Sunday; the Friday is usually for those who have reached “solo” status with Suncoast PCA. However, students are always welcome to come out and watch on the Fridays if they wish, they just cannot drive and we do not allow passengers in the cars on the track during the “hot” laps.

We recommend you arrive no later than 7 am on Saturday and Sunday, if your initial arrival is the day of the event. You have from about 7 am to 7:30 to unload, set-up, register and get your car through inspection, so be prepared to move quickly and efficiently! You’ll have a long day ahead of you, so if you are able, we suggest arriving the day before to set up and get registration and tech inspection out of the way - the morning is a lot less frantic, and you will be better rested. The specific details of the weekend are all on the event schedule for each event, which is sent out to the participants a few days before the event starts.

Please note that all participants MUST BE at least 18 years of age and hold a valid driver’s license!

THINGS YOU WILL ABSOLUTELY NEED:

- A free of charge account at www.clubregistration.net. This is the scheduling software and payment processor we use. Registration for all Suncoast PCA events are done in



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“ClubReg”. If you already have a ClubReg account, you do not need to create a second one.

- A car that has been inspected by a Porsche dealer or an authorized shop within the 30 days leading up to the event (Approved Shop List provided by Suncoast PCA at time of registration confirmation or before-hand by request of registrant). This pre-arrival “tech inspection” is required for each and every event, for all cars going out on the track for “hot” sessions. Cars being used ONLY for the lunchtime parade laps are not required to have these “tech inspections”.
- A tech inspection form, fully filled out by a qualified mechanic, personal information filled in and signed by both the driver and mechanic (Tech Form provided by Suncoast PCA at time of registration confirmation or before-hand by request of registrant).
- Helmet (Snell Rated SA2015 or SA2020). Moped and motorcycle helmets are not allowed and we do not provide loaner or rental helmets.
- A tow hook (All Porsches have one in the tool kit in the frunk).
- Lug nuts torqued to spec - TRUST NO ONE. EITHER DO IT YOURSELF OR WATCH YOUR MECHANIC DO IT.
- Static cling or magnetic numbers, or painters’ tape, for applying the number on your car. (Numbers are not reserved and are assigned for each event, on a first-come-first-served basis, once you have been confirmed for the event).
- A valid driver’s license.
- Miscellaneous personal items like folding chairs, hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, rain jacket, food, snacks, beverages (no alcohol allowed until the track goes cold each evening; this applies to guests as wells), cash to purchase an event t-shirt or food at the “Track Shack”etc.

That’s it. Really. You probably have a much longer list in your head of things your car needs to be “track prepared”, but your Porsche, right from the factory, is often far more prepared for this



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event than we are - it was built for this! Lots of folks use their “daily driver” with regular street tires, other folks have fully race prepped cars – to each their own.

ARRIVING AT THE TRACK:

To enter the track, you must first stop at the gatehouse by the bridge, sign a track waiver and receive a wristband (this is your track entry wristband). Then proceed over the bridge towards the large structure which houses the pit stalls and race control in the tower. If you did not reserve a pit spot, you can set up on most of the grassy areas or on the massive concrete area to your right (the paddock) when you cross the bridge. We rent the whole track for each of our events so you can leave your things in your pit stall overnight as there are security personnel roaming throughout the nighttime hours.

REGISTRATION AND TECH INSPECTION (these are in addition to the online event registration and the pre-arrival tech inspection):

Once you have arrived at the track, you must register and have your car inspected before going out on track. GO TO REGISTRATION FIRST, THEN PROCEED TO TECH INSPECTION.

Track registration and tech inspection are typically open the evening before the event, from 5-ish to 7-ish pm, and the mornings of the weekend, starting at 7 am. On most weekends, registration takes place at the base of the grandstand tower with tech inspection set up nearby. Exact times will be listed in the event schedule e-mailed to you a few days before the event.

All waivers should have been signed electronically in Clubregistration.net before the event. At registration, this will be verified, and you receive the wristband of your run group (i.e., Green, Blue, White, Black or Pink; instructors also receive an Orange wristband). If you have minors (***anyone under 18 years of age is considered a minor***), have them come with you to registration as you will need to sign additional waivers for them (in addition to the one they sign at the gate), and they will need minor wristbands (in addition to the wristbands they receive at the gate).



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TECH INSPECTION: COME PREPARED!

The tech inspection station is often easily located by either following the signs or just looking for a line of cars; it is usually located just past the fuel station. We are trying to move cars through the inspection line as efficiently as possible, so please come prepared, stay with your vehicle and keep the line moving.

BEFORE you come to the tech inspection station, your vehicle should be ready to go out on track. This means:

- Your tow hook must be installed in the car.
- Your assigned car numbers must be on each side of the car and on the rear of the car (you can use painters' tape if you do not have magnetic or vinyl numbers).
- Helmet out of the bag and sitting on your front passenger seat.
- All items out of the car! This includes floor mats, coins, glove box contents, spouses/significant others... and thoroughly inspect for any items under or behind the seats. If it is not firmly affixed to the vehicle, get it out! Bring a Ziploc bag or similar to put your important glove box contents into when you empty your glove box.
- If you are driving a convertible with the top down or a vehicle that does not have a roof, arm restraints are required, roll bar, or not.
- Not all convertibles are approved to drive in our DE events. If you have a convertible, it **MUST** have factory installed roll-over protection. Before you register, contact our DE Tech chair (DETech@SuncoastPCA.org) to confirm your car meets the requirements.

We inspect the vehicle to make sure you prepared your car properly. This means:

- Give your signed and **FULLY** completed tech inspection form to the tech inspector. (You must have filled in the personal information including your driver's license expiration date and signed it!).



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- The tech inspector will make a short check of your car to include various items on their checklist including your tow hook is installed, your car numbers are on and match the number you were assigned, and your helmet has the current SA rating.
- They will then place a sticker at the top left corner of your windshield to confirm your car has been through inspection and is ready for the track. Don't leave without a sticker!

LAST STEP!

After tech inspection, all students are directed to line up their vehicles in the “hot pits” in preparation for the orientation lap that takes place immediately after the morning drivers meeting (note - helmets are not required for the orientation laps). Leave your car in the hot pits and proceed to the base of the tower for the MANDATORY drivers meeting and to be matched up with your PCA assigned instructor.

Then . . . Have fun!!!

FAQ Summary:

Yes, we drive in the rain. Our events run rain or shine so come prepared as we do not shut down unless the Sebring facility shuts down – which is very rare.

Yes, we have a cancellation policy. It is part of your registration process, please ensure you read it fully and understand it **before** you sign that you agree.

Yes, you will be responsible for any damages to the track that you cause during the event. If Sebring sends Suncoast PCA an invoice for those damages, we will pass those amounts on to the driver at fault.

Yes, we have restrictions on clothing and footwear. No open toed shoes, no flip flops or sandals, no hiking boots, preferred are flat soled shoes like a tennis shoe, cotton clothing is preferred, shorts and short sleeves are acceptable, sleeveless tanks and tops are not acceptable.



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No, you do not need gloves (although most of us use them) or any other safety clothing.

Yes, your guests are welcome. We are a private event so only those on the guest list will be admitted. All guests must follow the same rules as the registered participants and registered participants are responsible for their guests' actions.

No, we do not allow passengers in the cars during any hot lap sessions. Passengers are only allowed in the lunchtime parade laps (slow speed behind a pace car).

No, we do not require "track day insurance" on your car. This is a personal preference that many drivers choose to get. There are many companies that offer this specialty insurance, google "track day" or "HPDE" insurance to learn more.

If you have any additional questions or need further information, email the DE Registrar at DERegistrar@SuncoastPCA.org.

We look forward to seeing you soon at Sebring!!