



Rules of the road

...yes they apply to runners as well

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Running can be beautiful and rewarding but when a fellow runner is exhibiting less than considerate behavior it can really get your panties in a bunch. Whether running in a training group, on a multi-use trail or in a race, there are some common unwritten rules to make running a happy mind and body experience.

- **Keep personal noise to a minimum.** Cadence or coaching devises that make noise should not be audible to others. It is also kind to remove keys and loose change from your pockets.
- **Do not flank the road.** Running in pairs is fine but in threes or more can cause difficulty to runners coming head on or passing from behind. On single track trails, tuck in behind each other when a runner is coming head on.
- **Stick to the right.** Just like driving your car, slower traffic to the right and pass on the left . I like to call out to a runner or walker that I am coming up on that I will be “passing on your left” at least 10 yards before I get to them to avoid startling other athletes. This also applies when running on a track; allow sprinters to take the inner lane and walkers hang to the outside lanes.
- **Dogs are supposed to be man's best friend** but an unfriendly or unleashed dog joining it's master on a run has caused me to pick up my pace a few too many times.
- **Look twice when crossing the road.** While pedestrians are presumed to have the right away they do not have carte blanche when it comes to the road ways. I have seen runners give rude hand gestures to motorists who never had a chance to see them coming...where is the zen in that?
- **We love our roads and just like we cannot** stand someone flicking their cigarette out the window, we should not litter our gel wrappers or water containers either. Either wait for a trash can or stash those wrappers back where they came from.
- **Smile and say hello!** It is nice to share your enjoyment with others so a kind nod or wave goes a long way.

When participating in an organized event:

- **Pay the price!** Don't be a bandit...Not only is it illegal but it is disrespectful to race organizers and volunteers.
- **Embrace your true running level.** Race organizers generally organize corrals that help racers line up according to running level, but it never fails that inexperienced runners or walkers wiggle their way to the front only to cause those who lined up correctly get frustrated from behind. Likewise, walkers will be much happier if not being pushed or harassed by competitive runners. Not to harp but please only group in twos across the road.
- **Fuel up and keep moving.** Don't stop at aid stations...if you need to walk while taking in your fuel simply pull over to the opposite side and enjoy your snack. For some you might find it impossible to drink without slowing down so I would like to offer two

suggestions, learn to crease your cup to allow fluids to actually go in your mouth or carry your own fluids to avoid clogging up fuel stations. Finally, don't just toss your cup at your feet allowing fluids to spray others around you...aim for the trash that races put out for a reason.

- **While we are talking about fluids...spitting.** Please look before you spit and aim for your own feet rather than the unsuspecting runner behind you....enough said on that one.
- **Finish line:** I know you do not want to take one step further but you must! Let those behind you finish strong and check your watch after you have cleared the arches.
- **Thank your race crew!** From the starting line to the finish line there are many volunteers, public safety officers and cheering groups who have been there for you. Without them, the race would just be some chalk on the ground with a guy standing at the finish with a stop watch. Smile and thank them for taking the time to be there for you.
- **After the race, don't** stock up for the winter on the post-race samples. Take the fuel you need and leave some for others.
- **Ahhh...now isn't that better.** By showing respect for our fellow runners and those who support our endeavors we will benefit from more than just good finishing time when the day is done.