



SCOTTISH
MOTOR
RACING
CLUB

SMRC GO RACING GUIDE

GETTING STARTED

We may be biased but nothing really compares to the thrill of going motor racing; the anticipation as you sit on the starting grid, the satisfaction of hooking up your perfect lap, the intensity of the wheel to wheel battles and the laughter and encouragement you get from your fellow racers when you get back into the paddock. Seen as you're here reading this page, you're probably pretty keen to get in on the action and join the racing community yourself.

Getting started in motor racing can seem a daunting process but remember, everyone – no matter what level they are involved at – had to go through this at some point. To help make your journey into the sport as easy as possible, we have pulled together a quick 'Go Racing' guide to help you join us on the grid.

Step 1

GET YOUR LICENCE

In order to compete in circuit racing in the UK you will need a competition licence from Motorsport UK; the governing body for motorsport in the UK. No driver can take to the race track on a competitive race weekend or test day without one, so this should be your first priority.

To begin with, you'll need to obtain a 'Go Racing Pack'. This can be obtained from the Motorsport UK, or [Knockhill Racing Circuit](#) websites. In the pack you'll find an application form plus QR codes linking you to a digital version of the Motorsport UK National Competition Rules, educational films, an exclusive 'race driver' keyring and a booklet detailing the next steps to take in order to acquire your first Competition Licence.

If you are under 60 years old, you will need to get a vision test at this stage. If you are 60 years old or over, you will be required to get a vision test and a medical, completed by your GP, at this stage.

The 'Go Racing Pack' prepares you for completing your Novice Driver Training Course. In Scotland, you can book and take your Novice Driver Training Course at Knockhill Racing Circuit but if you are based elsewhere, most UK circuits offer this service also. The course itself consists of a two-part examination. One half will be a written test of your knowledge

gained from the 'Go Racing Pack' you received, while the other part will see you on track with an instructor to test your capabilities behind the wheel.

If you are deemed by the instructors to have passed both sections of the test and your application is signed off, you can then submit it to Motorsport UK. The cost of your first licence is included within the 'Go Racing Pack', and there is a renewal cost for future seasons.

Providing the application is all correct and to their satisfaction, they will process it and send you your very own 'Race Club' racing licence.

Well done – you're officially a racing driver!

Step 2

CHOOSE A CHAMPIONSHIP

We run championships for a variety of different categories to suit all budget's, interests and abilities from our Citroen C1 Cup to our Scottish Classic Sports and Saloon Championship. Your first port of call is to look at the [championship section of our website](#) and read up on each of the championships to see which one interests you the most.

From there, we would recommend having a chat with the relevant Championship Representative. The Championship Representatives oversee the running of their relevant championship; they act as the main point of contact for drivers and teams, helping to keep them up to date with relevant information and also helping answer the questions of new drivers and/or teams who are interested in getting started in the championship. They will be able to provide more detailed information on available cars, insight into costings and help to arrange a test for you.

Contact details for all the championship representatives are detailed on the relevant championship pages of this website.

Step 3

JOIN THE SMRC & REGISTER FOR YOUR CHAMPIONSHIP

In order to compete in one of our championships, you will need to join the club as a racing member and then register for your given championship.

As a member of the SMRC, you will benefit from regular club news, invites to our competitive and social events – including the prestigious annual awards dinner – discounted tickets to race meetings and a range of exclusive member discounts.

You can join and get full information on [membership and registration here](#):

Step 4

BUY YOUR RACEWEAR

Before you take to the track, you will need to have all the correct racewear and safety equipment. These items have to comply with up-to-date safety standards, detailed within Chapter 9 of the Motorsport UK National Competition Rules.

As a general rule, we recommend buying the best safety kit you can afford, particularly when it comes to helmets; it's your head after all! We don't recommend buying racewear second hand and be aware that any tears or damage to safety equipment may fail scrutineering.

As an SMRC member, you will benefit from exclusive discounts with Rennat Racewear located in the Paddock at Knockhill (one-stop shop for all of your racewear requirements), Torq Racewear (supplier of custom suits and racewear) and McGill Motorsport (specialist suppliers of racewear, motorsport parts and equipment), so we recommend speaking with both these companies to get your racewear kit sorted.

In terms of the basics, the following items are what's required as the bare minimum to allow you to take part in a race weekend. In addition, fireproof underwear (including balaclava's) are not mandatory but are recommended.

Race Helmet – you will need a SNELL or FIA verified and approved helmet. Any helmet bought from new can

be used for 10 years from when they were first homologated.

Race Suit – you will need an FIA approved race suit. The suits are made of fireproof materials, to keep you safe in the unlikely eventuality of a fire. There are a broad variation of styles, options on custom fit versus off the shelf suits and differences in weight and moisture wicking capabilities.

Gloves – you will need an FIA approved pair of race gloves. The gloves are also made of fireproof materials and help to keep you safe in the event of a fire but also help your comfort and grip on the wheel whilst driving.

Boots – you will need an FIA approved pair of race boots. These are generally lightweight and thin fitted boots which are designed to help ensure that you have appropriate levels of grip and feel on the pedals.

Frontal Head Restraint (FHR) – sometimes known as HANS devices, FHR's are mandatory for circuit racing. They are designed to protect the neck in the event of an accident by reducing the speed and the distance that it is thrown forward by the impact. They are typically available in a selection of fixed recline angles to suit various seating positions as found in saloon, or single seater racing cars.

Step 5

KNOW THE REGULATIONS

The regulations for motorsport competition are fairly comprehensive, which is a good thing because it helps to ensure a safe and fair environment for all involved. However, it can be a little daunting for newcomers, so we have broken down the key sets of regulation that you will need to be aware of as a motorsport competitor.

The Motorsport UK National Competition Rules (NCR):

The NCR contains all the regulations for all four-wheel motorsport in the UK (not just racing), so it's a pretty big and complex set of rules. The latest version can be found on the Motorsport UK website.

Because the NCR applies to all motorsport disciplines, it won't all be relevant to you as a racing driver. Circuit Racing is covered in Chapter 12, so this will be section that you should be most familiar with, particularly for the written element of your ARDS test. Chapters 7, 8 & 9 cover the technical and safety aspects for competition so you should also read these sections.

Championship Regulations:

Championship Regulations cover items specific to the each Championship and can be found on the SMRC website. They are divided into Sporting (covering race procedures and championship points etc.) and Technical (covering specific parts required for each car) Regulations.

Supplementary Regulations:

These are additional regulations published by the Organising Club and are specific to the running of each event. You should familiarise yourself with these when entering events as they cover items such as start procedures etc.

Step 6

RUN WITH A TEAM OR RUN YOUR OWN CAR?

When it comes to preparing for and running your car at the race meetings, drivers have a choice between doing this work themselves, with the support of friends and/or family, or alternatively you may opt to run with a professional team.

This very much comes down to personal choice, your level of mechanical expertise, your available time, your access to a towing vehicle and of course your budget. Established racing teams can be extremely helpful for people who are not very technically minded and don't have much time. They often offer a variety of services from full 'arrive and drive' where they prepare, transport and run the car at the event so all you have to worry about is the driving (some even offer a rental service, so you don't need to own a race car), to a hybrid service where you prepare the car yourself and transport it to the venue and they provide some technical support at the event.

Clearly, running with a team comes at an additional cost so this has to be factored into your thinking and for many, part of the enjoyment of a race weekend is in the technical preparation and maintenance of the race car.

If you are interested in running with a team, then you can find details of all operating teams in the championship pages of our website.

Step 7

YOUR RACE CAR

This is the fun part! You have a couple of options when it comes to buying (or renting) your first race car. Which option you choose, will partly depend on the championship you are entering into, your mechanical experience and the time you have available.

Build your own car

If you are racing in one of our saloon based championships, you may look to source a 'donor car' (often people do this via car auctions or sites such as Autotrader) and buy all the components to build your car to the regulations yourself.

The exact specifications for the build can be found in the relevant championship regulations (available on the championship pages of our website) but as a minimum, the mandatory upgrades required for safety are as follows: roll cage (approved bolt-in or welded-in to NCR specifications), bucket seat and harness, electrical cut-off switch (able to be operated from inside or outside the car), plumbed-in fire extinguisher (also able to be operated from inside or outside the car) and a high intensity rain light. You will also require a timing transponder, which is an electronic device linked to the timekeeping system used to identify you and record your lap times.

In addition, you will likely be making upgrades to the suspension and brake pads to enhance performance, as well as a set of race tyres.

If you have any queries or doubts as to what is required to comply with the championship regulations, please ask your championship representative and they will happily help with your query. There's no such thing as a silly question!

Buy a complete car

There are usually a number of complete cars available for purchase for our championships. Take a look at our Classified section www.smrc.co.uk/classifieds to browse the current cars up for sale. In addition, it is worth speaking with the relevant championship representative, as they will have a good knowledge of the cars that are available on the ground.

For some championships, it can also make more economic sense to purchase a complete car than building one from scratch; again, it's worth speaking with your championship representative about this.

Hire a Car

Some teams offer a hire service, which can be a good option for some drivers. For example, if you want to try a championship to see if you like it before committing to buying a car.

Step 8

ENTERING A RACE

Entering an SMRC race meeting is easy, thanks to the online entry system. As a club member, you will have access to our members portal. Once logged into our members portal and having registered for your chosen championship, you simply visit the 'book event tab', select the relevant event(s) you want to enter, enter your details and make your payment.

Be sure to enter (and pay for) the event before the entry deadline (detailed within the supplementary regulations but normally 7 days before the event). You will receive a confirmation e-mail when you successfully enter and pay for an event. In addition, you will also receive a final instructions e-mail containing all the relevant key documents you'll need for the weekend ahead, including; an event timetable, a paddock plan, a drivers briefing video or notes, a final instructions document and an entry list.

It's important to read through these documents prior to the event and ensure you know what is expected of you over the course of the weekend.

Non registered / non members are also welcome to enter events on a guest basis by contacting the Club's Competitions Director.

Step 9

CIRCUIT ARRIVAL AND SET-UP

Your final instructions documentation will detail what time and how the circuits can be accessed. For Knockhill, generally, access is available the day before the event for testing but this can vary depending on what other activities the venue has operating.

The paddock plan, which is sent out to competitors with the final instructions email, will highlight where all competitors are to set up, park road vehicles and trailers. In addition, the final instructions will outline any general paddock / pit lane rules, so make sure you study this prior to arrival. For example, there is often a one-way system in place around the Knockhill paddock on race day.

If you have any questions, remember to give your championship representative a shout.

Step 10

TESTING

There will almost always be an opportunity to test immediately prior to a race meeting. Testing is your opportunity to practice the track and test your car prior to the race meeting. Unlike track days, passing on both sides and in to corners is allowed, so this is very different to a track day. We highly recommended that you take advantage of such sessions, particularly if you are just starting out in the sport.

Testing is run by the circuit itself and not the SMRC. This means that you book and pay for testing with the circuit direct. At Knockhill, testing will generally take place the day before the race day, or sometimes on the morning of the race event. For away rounds, the testing will also be run by the relevant circuit (most likely on the day before the event) and you will be provided with booking details in advance of the event.

The organising circuit will provide you with all your timetable information for testing and provide any further

instructions on requirements.

Generally speaking, when you arrive at the circuit for testing you will be able to park up in the area that you are due to be in for the race event itself (see section 9: circuit arrival and set-up).

It's worth noting that testing is for race cars and licenced competitors preparing for competitions; it is different to a track day and will require you to present your competition licence when you sign on (at Knockhill, this normally takes place in the main circuit office).

Step 11

SCRUTINEERING

Before you take to the track the Scrutineers will carry out a noise check. The officials may ask to inspect your car and personal safety equipment in person so you should ensure that everything is order. Also make sure that you take your competition licence to the event as the officials may ask to see this.

The purpose of scrutineering is to check all competing vehicles and safety equipment (e.g helmets and race suits) for compliance with the regulations – ensuring fair play – and general safety. Pre-event scrutineering is focussed on safety checks and amongst other things normally involves checking fire extinguishers, engine cut off's, seats and harnesses as well as checking that competitors racewear is to the appropriate standard and has no obvious tears or defects. The scrutineering checks are carried out by qualified Motorsport UK Scrutineers, who are trained to make these safety and technical evaluations.

If the Officials are satisfied that your car and safety equipment is compliant with the required safety standards and your competition licence is in order, you will be approved to participate. In the eventuality that a Scrutineer finds

something wrong with your car, it will be your responsibility to fix the issue and re-present the car to the Scrutineers for checking before you can take to the track.

Before you take to the track the Scrutineers may carry out a noise check. This will typically take place just before you line up in the assembly area for your first session of the event; the Scrutineers will ask you to stop and rev the car to a prescribed rpm whilst they carry out the noise test with a decibel meter. If your car fails the noise test, it will be your responsibility to make the appropriate and legal modifications to ensure it complies with the circuit restrictions.

The final scrutineering check will be eligibility, which typically takes place after qualifying or racing. The officials may direct your car to the Scrutineering bay at the end of the track session for the Scrutineers to check your car and take measurements for comparison against the Championship Technical regulations, ensuring fairness of competition.

Step 12

DRIVER'S BRIEFING

All new drivers and those racing at a circuit for the first time are required to attend a briefing with the clerk of the course before they are allowed to race. The time and location of your briefing will be communicated in the final instructions for the event.

Additionally all drivers, whether new or experienced, may be provided with briefing notes or a briefing video prior to the event, or may be requested to attend a face to face briefing during the event.

The briefings are compulsory; if you fail to attend or read the notes provided, you may be fined or penalised, so it's important to make sure you know where and when your briefing is set to take place.

The Clerk of the Course conducting the briefing will go over the standard procedures for the race meeting and will cover pertinent points such as safety car procedures, flag signals, key areas for track limits and penalties etc. It's important to listen in the briefings; being on top of the rules and procedures not only helps ensure you have a safe and smooth event, it can also help give you a competitive advantage!

Step 13

QUALIFYING

Your first official session of the event will normally be qualifying (although in some cases, there may be an official 'free practice session' beforehand). The aim of qualifying is clearly to set your fastest possible lap time in order to earn yourself a strong grid position for the race. However, if it's one of your first events, it's important not to get too caught up thinking about the outcome of a fast lap time; this will likely lead to you over driving and making mistakes. Instead, focus on the task of driving the racing line, hitting your braking points consistently and building up your confidence throughout the session. Remember when you first head out onto the circuit, the brakes and tyres will be cold (this is particularly relevant to Knockhill!) so it's particularly important to build up your pace gradually, until you develop a more instinctive feel for grip levels.

When it's time for your qualifying session (or any other session for that matter) you will be called to the assembly area over the PA system. Be aware that it can be tricky to hear the PA system and the events can sometimes run ahead or behind schedule, so it's worth keeping an eye on track activity, your fellow competitors, and listening out for announcements to make sure you are ready for your session.

Step 13

QUALIFYING (CONT.)

Once signaled out of the assembly area, you will head down the pit lane in single file and the cars will be released onto the track (signaled via a green flag / light system at the end of the pit lane).

Usually, our qualifying sessions will last around 15 minutes depending on the championship and the timetable. You must complete at least three laps in order to successfully qualify for a race. From time to time, a car problem or a mistake that puts you off the track may prevent you from completing three laps within the session. If this happens and you're able to ensure your car is still race worthy, the Clerk of the Course will generally try to find an appropriate gap in the timetable (or another qualifying session for you to fit into) to allow you to complete your mandatory laps and get out to race.

Once the qualifying session has come to an end, you'll be directed into the pit lane and straight into 'parc fermé', where you are not allowed to do anything to your car (nor is anyone from your team allowed to touch the car) until you're instructed to leave by the Scrutineers. You'll then be able to view a copy of the timing results (normally published online after each session) to see how you got on and where you will be starting the race.

Step 14

THE RACE

As with qualifying, you'll be called to the assembly area for your race(s) via the circuit PA system and directed on where to park up by the marshals. When ready, the marshals will signal all cars out onto the circuit for a formation lap to the grid, where the grid marshals will help direct you to your correct grid slot.

There are variations on starting procedures for different championships (for example, some have rolling starts and some have standing starts) so you should check the championship and supplementary regulations to ensure you know the correct procedures and sequence of events for your respective championship. If you are unsure of any aspect of this, be sure to ask the Clerk of the Course.

The race finish will be signalled by the chequered flag. At this point you will complete an in lap to the pits where you will be directed by the marshals to parc fermé. In parc fermé, you may be selected by the Scrutineers for checks (see Section 11. Scrutineering); this could involve anything from checking your cars weight and ride height is correct, to other technical checks on things like gearboxes and ECU's, to ensure that your car is compliant with the regulations.

If you are found to have contravened a rule, details of the infringement will be passed to the Clerk of the Course for review and a decision on any penalty to be applied. It is important to remember that no one is allowed to touch or work on your car while it is in parc fermé. If anyone from your team touches your car, you could be dealt a penalty.

If you are fortunate enough to have finished in the top 3 or top awarded positions (as outlined in your championship regulations) then you will be required to head to the podium to collect your silverware and pose for pictures and/or interviews! The marshals will direct you on where to go; at Knockhill, this means parking up next to the podium (next to Race Control) initially and then moving your car along to the Scrutineering bay after the podium celebration for any required checks.

Step 15

JUDICIAL PROCEDURES

As in any sport, there needs to be a judicial process in place to help ensure fair play on the track. The marshals on track and officials in Race Control (via video), monitor the sessions and watch out for any breaches of the rules and/or incidents that need further investigation / action, either during or after the session.

On occasion, you may find yourself getting called to Race Control to speak with the Clerk of the Course or Stewards about an incident that took place on track. This will normally be communicated over the PA system. If you are called to see the Officials, you should head to Race Control straight away to discuss the matter in hand. You may be asked to provide video footage from your onboard camera to help determine the outcome of an incident(s).

The judicial process is outlined in Chapter 2 of the National Competition Rules; it is your responsibility as a driver to fully understand the process.

If you feel that another drivers actions have compromised your race and the result, you have the right to put in a protest against that driver yourself.

Once again, the procedures for this process are also detailed in Chapter 2 of the NCR and it is important you understand them as a driver.

Ultimately, nobody wants to see race results being decided in the Officials' office but by nature, it does happen from time to time and it is important that you as a competitor, fully understand the procedures and are prepared for all eventualities.

Step 16

OFFICIALS

We've mentioned Officials a few times already. Here are the key officials that you may meet at an event and their duties;

Secretary of the Event:

Responsible for all event administration associated with the event, including checking competition licences.

Scrutineers: Licenced by Motorsport UK and responsible for checking technical compliance with competitors vehicles and equipment from both a safety and eligibility perspective.

Timekeepers: Licenced by Motorsport UK and responsible for producing results and classifications for each session covering recorded lap times and race finishing positions. This is measured by a combination of transponders fitted to each vehicle, timing loops located below the track surface at various points around the circuit and photocell beams crossing the track at the finish line.

Clerks of the Course: Licenced by Motorsport UK and responsible for the overall running of the event including the safety of all participants, in addition to reviewing incidents and potential breaches of the regulations.

Stewards: A panel of 3 experienced officials responsible for investigating alleged breaches of regulations and any matters reported to them by the Clerk of the Course (see section 15 Judicial Procedures). Stewards also represent the sport's governing body, Motorsport UK to ensure that organisers run the event in compliance with all relevant regulations, and send an event report to Motorsport UK.

Marshals: The 'eyes and ears' of the Clerk of the Course. The volunteers positioned around the circuit to observe the action, report to the Clerk of the Course, signal to the drivers by the use of flags and light panels and be the first on scene for on-track incidents. Specialist marshals are also present in the Paddock, Assembly Area, Pitlane and Startline to assist with the smooth running of the event.

Step 16

OFFICIALS_(CONT.)

Medics: Hopefully you will never need to meet them, but you will be glad of their presence. At each event there will be a minimum of two fully qualified Doctors plus a plethora of Paramedics and trained Rescue personnel with specialist medical & extrication equipment on hand to attend any incident.

Some of these officials will be designated as “Judges of Fact” such as Scrutineers & Timekeepers and marshals responsible for operating the pitlane speed gun or observing cars exceeding the track limits. Statements made by “Judges of Fact” cannot be appealed against.

Further details about the officials required to run a race meeting are available in Chapter 5 of the National Competition Rules.