

## Guidelines for Route Directions

PURPOSE: The guidelines are intended to assist the Trailmaster to provide clear, accurate, consistent and easy-to-use route directions for sanctioned events. The guidelines are based on the American Volkssport Association (AVA) guidance for event directions.

## GENERAL FORMAT STANDARDS

- **Keep the written directions short.** The directions for a 10 km event route should usually be on one sheet of paper with written directions on one side and a map on the other side. Directions and map for a 5 km route should usually be on one side of a single sheet of paper. Often both 10 km and 5 km routes can be described for a single event on a single sheet of paper with a map on the back.
- **Prepare in two-column format so sheet can be folded in half lengthwise.** This allows the participant to fold the directions further for convenience of holding them, preventing them from flopping about due to air currents, and presenting the direction steps in a way that is easily readable while walking.

## WRITTEN DIRECTIONS STANDARDS

1. The Heading should contain the following:
  - **Name of event, stamp #, length(s) of route(s), and trail rating(s)** for the route(s)
  - **Address of Start Point** (in case the walker needs to return early or gets lost)
  - **Name of sponsoring club** followed by a **copyright** indication (e.g. ©2022)
  - For questions about or problems with the route or directions, include the **name and phone number (preferably mobile) of the point of contact.**
  - Add “Medical Emergencies: Call 911” or other emergency contact information as appropriate for the area of the event.
  - It is helpful to indicate where restrooms are along the route. (ie Restroom at start and in Central Park 5K)
  - The following statement must be on the walk directions and maps: **“These directions and maps may only be used in conjunction with a signed American Volkssport Association athletic waiver. All other uses are prohibited.”**
2. The body of the directions should meet the following:
  - **Number each direction step.** This helps the participant keep his/her place.
  - For each turn, use bolded capital letters for the turn direction (**RIGHT, LEFT**). When it is not a full turn, modify the turn direction to better describe the turn (**SLANT RIGHT, ANGLE LEFT, JOG RIGHT**). Sometimes it is helpful to avoid confusion by indicating the route continues **STRAIGHT** at a specific point. Do not use TL,TR.

- **Keep each direction step simple by describing a single directive** (e.g. “**RIGHT** on Johnson St”; “**RIGHT** on Johnson St to 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave”; “**RIGHT** on Johnson St for 5 blocks”). Many steps in a long sentence or a paragraph make it difficult to follow the directions.
- **If a street changes names along the route, indicate this in the directions.**
- **Identify a landmark when it is necessary to ensure a direction step is followed.** For trails in a forested or other natural area, landmarks may be very important for a walker to recognize a turn at the correct trail intersection.
- **As a rule, describe architectural, natural or historical sites along the route on a separate “Points of Interest” sheet.** Give each point of interest a number or letter designation. Reference each of those points at the appropriate place in the directions and perhaps on the map. In the event directions, you may occasionally wish to bring the participant’s attention to an important natural or historical landmark. Do so only if you can keep it very brief (“Note Empire State Building on your left.”), and if you have enough space so the directions and map fit on a single sheet using front & back.
- **Optional: Thank the participants for coming to your event if you have room at the end.** Encourage them to thank a representative of the business or organization that has agreed to host your start point.

## MAP STANDARDS

- **For information on map sources, see the *Trailmaster Guide* .**
- **Plan on a full side of a sheet of paper for a 10 km route map and a half (or a little less) of a side for a 5 km route map.**
- Most maps produced from commercial software are oriented with north being at the top of the page. Nonetheless, **it is helpful to assure participants of the map’s orientation by typing “North” at the top of the page or drawing a north directional arrow on the page.** If the map is oriented differently than north at the top of the page, be sure to indicate the direction of north on the map.
- **Ensure that the names of sufficient streets are shown on the map** to help the participants keep track of where they are. Include at least one street name outside the route boundary in case a participant misses a turn.
- Try to **make the map to scale** if you must hand draw it.
- **Show the location of the Start/Finish.**
- **Points of interest can be shown on the map** as well as the location of checkpoints, restrooms, drinking water, challenges met.
- **Use arrows along the route to indicate the route direction.**
- **Make sure the map lines are dark enough to make good copies.**