

A Hash Primer for Hares with no Brains!

When setting a run remember that, We are a Drinking Club with a Running Problem **NOT** a Running Club with a Drinking Problem! Also, the first rule of hashing that you need to remember is that there are no rules!

Hares should volunteer for a run through the Trailmaster and should choose a convenient date. Trying to find someone else to set your run on a 25th of December because you have family commitments can prove to be remarkably tricky!

If you are a Virgin Hare, it's best to set a run with a more experienced Hasher. There are plenty around who will after a fair amount of nagging be willing to help. Despite the description of the markings below, it is no substitute for having an Old Hand help you.

When setting a run, buy chalk well in advance from a hardware store The people setting, should also take a couple of smaller bags of chalk each to mark the trail.

Hares

The job of the Hares is a not an easy one.

The Hares should :-

- **Recce:** Go through the proposed route before actually setting it. When you have found a good venue, it usually takes two recces (reconnaissance runs), at least two weeks ahead of the run, before you can lay a good run. On the first recce learn the lay of the land. It's usually easiest to **plan the short and pregnant trail first**, and the running trail afterwards.
- **Organise a location** for the start of the run (ideally any decent restaurant/bar).
- **Organise for refreshments** for the hold – fruits, water and BEER and any other variation that comes to mind
- **Organise the On On** (restaurant for dinner and down downs – arrange the set up but mismanagement buys the beers for down downs).
- **OPTIONAL:** If possible, get sponsorship for a t-shirt, or surprise hashers with a free meal, beer, mug, birthday cake or anything you may deem appropriate

Selecting a Run-Site

Your first decision is to find a party location where hashers can drown their sorrows. **This cannot be underestimated!**

Choose a location which has a car park, with easy access, enough space for about 80 (or more) cars and is not on a narrow street and preferably not in a residential area. You will also need an open, and fairly flat, area .

Try and select a run-site which has some varied ground (hills and streams are always good fun), preferably with some jungle/wooded areas.

Once you decide a good location of the On-On, the rest is less difficult. At any rate, plan the run in advance to be sure about the locations.

The On On

The On On registration is 150/= a head. Registration is done by mismanagement which also purchases drinks for down downs. People buy their own drinks separately.

Choice of venue and cuisine is completely up to the Hare. Most restaurants will arrange a set menu or do a deal for a block booking. There are normally about 100 people at the On On, so they will often give a better price for drinks.

Keys And Guests:

Keys (collected by the person registering at beginning of the run) are the only means of checking that everyone returned safely. All Hashers are responsible for any passengers in their car. If you arrive by taxi, be sure someone knows you are running. Do not turn back from a run without informing someone, you may be thought lost, and search parties will be sent out.

Guests and Virgins are the Hashing host's responsibility. Guests and Virgins pay (200/=). Guest Fees apply whether or not your Guest participates in the actual run and does/doesn't drink alcohol.

Setting the Run

A good trail is one that everyone enjoys: the hare; the pack; everyone. A good trail is also a battle of wits between the hare (who sets the trail as a puzzle to be solved) and the pack (who try to solve the puzzle while covering as little distance as possible). Hashing is a social activity, so we try to keep everybody moving together at about the same average speed. The best way to achieve this is to set the same basic trail for everybody, but make sure that the most enthusiastic runners cover a lot of extra distance, checking out false trails and check backs. It is acceptable to use an occasional runners loop (or walkers shortcut), but try to avoid thinking of two separate groups. We come in all speeds from a slow walk to a fast run.

Typically a run should be a non-competitive trail between 6 and 9 km taking no more that 1 hr to complete is recommended. Runs of excessive length are not appreciated and the Trailmaster is duty-bound to cut the run short if it is getting late or for security reasons.

Speed is not important and we enjoy an environment filled with the sounds, sights, and smells of nature. The trail often takes us off road, off trail, through forests, along (and often into) ponds and rivers, and into the muck and mire. We like swamps, stinky things, water crossings, storm sewers, poison ivy, and other tortures. Other wonderful suggestions include, but are not limited to: thickets clogged with thorns poised to shred the skin of our legs, slippery trails filled with rocks and roots, through fences and barbed wire, streams and swampland rich in sneaker-sucking mud, dark, water-filled culverts and stretches of railroad tracks. The only thing we avoid is running in traffic. Our runners are not that smart and might dent cars if we encouraged traffic running.

Ideally set two runs. The first (short) run should be about 40 to 45 minutes of easy running. The other (long) run should be 45 to 60 minutes of running. For the short run please remember to have a short cut for the even shorter pregnant walking trail. It is often easier just to add an extra loop for the long run. In both cases please *do not* place the hashers in *any* situation, which may compromise their safety and also have the sweepers. If walking it should not take you longer than 2 hours and 15 minutes to set a run. This translates to about a 1 hour hash.

Remember:

- a. Check whether you need the owner's permission to use any part of the run's area
- b. Do not lay a trail across a golf course
- c. Do not lay a trail ACROSS graves. Give due respect.
- d. It makes sense to inform the local police station that there will be a run if there is one close-by
- e. Avoid crossing the main roads. If essential, do so using bridges or traffic lights

Hash Markings and Calls

1. **Marks on the left:** Marks are set on the left side.
2. **Chalk:** Please use chalk as a marker to set the trail. Take a sufficient amount of chalk (about 1 large bag). You can never have too many marks. The trail is laid by casting sufficient handfuls of chalk over the course to be run. Chalk should be spaced no more than 30 metres apart in open country, 25 metres in scrub and 10 metres in dense jungle, **the more chalk the better**. In wet weather, use even more chalk, and really wet weather may sometimes require a live hare!
3. **Brains:** It is best to assume that the hounds have **no intelligence**.

4. **Tactics:** Use plenty of checks and false trails. These are cunning traps set by the hares to put the hounds off the trail, the theory being to allow the slow runners to catch up, or even to reverse the field. A good run is one in which the slowest and fastest runner finish within a few minutes of each other. A check may be as simple as stopping markings for 100 metres even though the trail continues straight on or it may lead the pack in the wrong direction. Checks may be set in any combination or multiple .
5. **The Check, False Trail and Check Back.** The main purpose of a check is to slow down the front runners (FRBs) and allow the slower Hashers a chance to catch up. Checks, as indicated by a circle of chalk and are usually placed at a point along the route where there are intersecting trails or roads. Or around an object such as a tree, bush or rock. The check should be placed at an obvious intersection of trails. Decoy trails may be laid leading in the wrong direction, but use no more than two markers for these. (This number has been carefully chosen because of the difficulty many hounds have in counting past two - "One, two, many...". See rule #3 above). At this point your trail of dots will cease to exist and it's the job of the Hashers to spread out and find the new route, otherwise known as checking. You may find no dots or a double line. However, only one direction can have 3 or more dots of chalk and, of course, this is now ON. Checks should be in quiet areas. If the checks are in a noisy area, the harriers cannot hear the on on shout or the Horn. Besides, we should let the populace know the Hash is around.
6. **Holds:** Holds have two main functions: 1) To keep the pack together, by holding back the FRBs until the slower ones catch up, and 2) To make sure we have not lost anyone on emerging from difficult terrain (woods, river crossings, back alleys, bars). One hold for Monday runs and two for weekend runs is the norm.
7. **Loops:** A small loop leaving a straight trail and circling back, 100~200 metres in length, is effective in keeping the pack together. Slow runners should arrive at the start of the loop just as leaders are returning to the main trail, thus the slow runners can continue straight ahead and rejoin the pack. This is not short-cutting. Another variation is a figure-of-eight trail.
8. **Villages:** Never check in villages. When laying chalk through villages always continue straight on in the direction than you entered. Villages should be avoided whenever possible.
9. **Crops:** Never set check in crops or cultivated land, as this can cause much damage. Never lay the trail through crops, always around the edge and whenever possible avoid crops entirely. Be considerate.
10. **Sweeping:** As the hares, you should divide yourselves in such a way that there is always someone sweeping the route for lost hashers or those that may run into trouble. At least one hare should be last to finish.
11. **Double-line check :** shown by a two straight lines across the trail on the ground and marks a dead-end. Runners have followed a false trail and *must* "check back" to find the correct trail.
12. **Circle-check :** shown by a large circle on the ground and instructs the runners to "look around" to pick up the trail again. Used when there is more than one or two possible routes ahead. Trail should resume *no more* than 100 metres from the circle....though it doesn't need to be obvious.
13. **On Home:** Near the end of the trail there should be an "on home" sign. The "on home" sign allows the fast runners to speed up for the last kilometer. It also tells the harriers that beer is coming soon.
14. **Back-Marking:** The hare **MUST** mark the true trail at the start, after each hold and at each check and check-back, if the FRBs have not already done so (we call this "back-marking"). The hare should therefore carry chalk with which to do this (flour, chalk...). This helps anyone who started late, went for a pee or got lost checking out a false trail, to catch up with the pack.

A detailed brief or map of the run must be given to the Trail Master before the run.

Trail Marking Problems

Long Grass

Chalk is useless in long grass. Even if you can see the mark when you first lay it, the slightest wind or rain will erase it. There are a number things you can do - mix and match to ensure that the trail is clear:

- Big arrow before the grass to show where to pick up the trail at the far side (this is a good general-purpose solution for crossing difficult terrain such as rivers, deep mud, busy roads...).

- Mark vertical surfaces such as fence posts, trees.
- Mark patches of bare earth such as molehills.
- Use strips of bio-degradable material (for example toilet paper) tied to the top of grass stems. Also, warn the pack at the briefing.

Woods

People can very easily lose the trail in woods, so it is vital to have plenty of marks. What happens is someone checks out a false trail, hears "on-on" and cuts through the trees towards the sound. It is then VERY easy to run right across the trail without ever seeing a mark. Mark on trees every few metres, so that you can always see two marks ahead or behind. If following a clear trail, you can also mark the ground, but be aware that marks will disappear very quickly:

Weather

Heavy rain and high winds will make the trail unusable, so if this sort of weather is forecast, there is no point in laying the trail the day before.

Possible solutions include:

- Walk or cycle round the trail and work out where you will go, then lay the trail a couple of hours before the run. Two experienced hashers can lay a trail in about one hour.
- Lay a "live hare" trail, starting 10 minutes before the pack (see below).
- Mark on vertical surfaces so your trail gets some protection.
- Place marks on the ground in protected corners, and under the overhang of bushes, trees, roofs... They still need to be visible though. Use a lot of chalk

Short circuits

It is a disaster if some or all of the pack cut across from the out-trail to the in-trail and miss most of the run (not to mention the beer stop) or even run into some unauthorized territories. The ideal trail is a nice fat shape such as a circle or square, so that there is no danger of hounds accidentally finding the wrong part of the trail. In practice, you will often have to compromise and have parts of the trail close to each other.

To minimise the risk of short-circuit:

- Mark the out-trail very clearly. Hounds who can see the next couple of marks ahead stay on the trail.
- If your trail turns a corner, mark it very clearly with two or more dots.
- Avoid checks while the trails are close together. If you must have a check, put a very clear double line (check back) on any direction which could lead to a short-circuit.

Previous Trail

Sometimes there is another hash in the same area, and by Murphy's Law, the marks of the other hash will be more visible than yours. If there is that danger, have a hare to direct the runners away from the wrong marks.

Live Hare

Usually, the hare will lay the trail before the run, and then the hare runs with the pack.

As an alternative, the hare can run "live" ahead of the pack. The hare lays a trail as he or she runs, and the pack tries to catch the hare. This calls for some special measures.

- Live hares usually run in pairs, who work together to lay the trail.
- The live hares start before the pack. Traditionally this is 10 minutes for a 1-hour run, but can be longer if a hare is inexperienced or not a strong runner.
- If the hares make it as far as the beer stop, they get another 10-minute start.

- The hares should use small bags of chalk that are lighter to carry and quicker to use.
- The hares must lay a clear trail, using checks and check-backs to slow the pack. They should not use "holds" to make the front-runners wait for slower members of the pack, unless they are caught (see below).
- The hares should "keep it simple" and avoid looping back close to the trail they have already laid - the pack may see them, at which point they will leave the trail and chase by sight!

If some hounds catch a hare, this must not be the end of the trail - there is still the rest of the pack to guide back to the start point. The hare who is caught should mark a Hold, to make the next hounds wait for the rest of the pack, then the hounds who have caught up join the hare to continue laying the trail.

Weekend Runs

For a weekend run, people expect a longer run of one and a half to two hours, so increase the distance in proportion and consider a second beer stop

On-on running

1. Remember the first rule - NO RULES.
2. Follow the marks. Short cuts or getting lost results in down downs.
3. When running shout "on on", "on left", "on right", "on up", "on down", "on over", etc. whenever you see a mark.
4. If you see a check, shout "Check." Two or three hashers should proceed in each direction. Ask: "Are you...?" Answer: "Checking" until the "on on" is heard. (Always, loud voices please.)
5. If the trail is not clear and you have doubts, shout "Are you...?" or "Looking." Do this until the on on or true trail is found.
6. Carry chalk and mark the checks and CBs clearly. That way the late starters or slow runners don't have to search again.

Hash Trash and Mug

The Hash Trash is sent out weekly via email with an account of the last run, and details of the forthcoming run. This is written up by the Hare who set the last weeks run, and sent to the scribe who forwards it to the rest of the Hash. Once you have set a run make sure you do a write up of the run following yours to get a Hare's mug.

IN BRIEF:

1. Either set the run on said date, or find someone to switch before your run.
2. Find enough beer - **a lot of BEER** and a good place for the On-On. This **cannot** be underestimated.
3. Set a run of 50-60 minutes with four or so checks. It should take you no longer than 2 hours 15 minutes, walking to set the trail.
4. Be prepared to drink your down-down.
5. Beer should not run out.
6. T-Shirts are welcome, free food and other goodies are welcome
7. Book Birthday Runs early.

Cancellations (heaven forbid!!!). If you can't make the run on the date assigned, please ask somebody to take over or more likely to trade for another date. Once you have agreed to set the run, **it is your responsibility to find a replacement in good time**

DO NOT CALL THE TRAIL MASTER A FEW DAYS BEFORE YOUR RUN TO TELL HIM THAT YOU CANNOT MAKE IT!!!

If you somehow managed to get to this point in this hash version of Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, well, then continue on to the next page without me. 'Nuff said!

Flying Toilet, Trailmaster, NHHH – May, 2005

SOME HASH SIGNS

SINGLE DOTS OF CHALK mark the trail: (3 or more, it's the right direction!)	● ● ●
A CIRCLE checkpoint: (find the correct trail)	○
TWO PARALLEL LINES: (false trail, go back)	
A BOX WITH A NUMBER INSIDE: (wait for the number of Hashers before continuing)	[15]
A CIRCLE WITH AN 'H' INSIDE: (hash halt, hold and wait for everyone)	(H)
AN ARROW: (follow direction, up or down, into water)	→
CIRCLE WITH AN 'X' INSIDE: (back check, go back & find trail)	⊗
HOOK 3: (First FRB waits for two others to make three then runs all the way back to the last hashers. The number changes)	∩ ₃
69: First FRB waits for six runners and then runs back for six others of opp. sex	69
Boob Check - Only harriets do the checking, all hashers wait for on, on	⊙ ⊙

ON ON ... !!

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