

Information sheet / FAQ sheet – Trail Riding - South London & Surrey TRF

Where Can I Ride?

I want to ride the green lanes around the Surrey and surrounding area, so what are green lanes?

- Green lanes are ancient un-surfaced roads; we only ride where we have a legal right to ride, so your bike must be road legal (insurance, tax and MOT)
- These are Byways Open to All Traffic, known as BOATs or Byways, and Unclassified County Roads (UCRs). These are shown on ordnance survey maps although some may have restrictions on them.

What Bike Should I Buy?

There are a large number of trail bikes of varying weight, capacity and power, so what bike should I buy?

- We find that a light weight, small capacity bike is best for trail riding, something between 200cc and 400cc. Over the years we have found that a 4 stroke with electric start is preferable.
- We do not recommend big trail bikes as they can be too heavy and too powerful. Though these are becoming more popular.
- Come along to a club night to ask what our members ride if you are not sure or discuss what you are considering buying.

Club Ride Outs?

There are ride outs for club members; we will also take out non-members once to see if they like trail riding. These ride outs are led by a volunteer from the club, the leader for the ride out will decide the route, duration and difficulty.

- Club ride outs are advertised on our South London & Surrey TRF Facebook Group (Events or Discussion).
- Ride outs are limited to 6 riders, and places must be pre-booked; contact the run leader to book a place.
- We have three types of ride outs: “Easy”, “Inbetweener” & “Intermediate”. The Easy runs are ideal for new members/beginners, Inbetweener runs are for people who have been on a few easy rides and want something a bit more challenging and “Intermediate” runs are for more experienced riders.
- Trail riding is more difficult than it appears bear this in mind, persevere with it and you will enjoy it more with each ride.
- Go at your own pace, the leader will always wait for you, and feel under no pressure to continue the ride out if you feel that you are tired or want to stop, Just tell the ride leader.

Before the Ride - What Will I Need For my Bike?

OK, so you bought your bike, how do you prepare it for trail riding and what spares do you need to carry?

- Slightly slacken off the brake & clutch levers, (at the mounting with the handlebars) so they move when they hit the ground, rather than breaking.
- Try the levers standing up on the bike to ensure they are in the correct position.
- Some riders fit handguards, but please read up on them and make your own decision as they may lead to hand injuries.
- Full tank of petrol
- Enough tools to carry out small repairs on the trail. You will probably fall off and have to straighten something or repair a puncture. I.e. Spanners, Allen keys, screwdrivers, pliers, 3 tyre levers, spare tube (a 21” tube will fit both wheels) small bicycle pump, spare spark plug and spark plug spanner. Note: Check all the nuts and bolts on your bike to ensure you have the correct size spanners.
- Recovery service, to get your bike recovered if you cannot fix the bike.
- Spare levers. (These can break even with hand guards fitted)
- Fit a small tool bag to the rear mudguard for your tools. Note: Please check that your mudguard is strong enough, you may have to strengthen it.

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- Adjust your tyre pressure to around 16-18 psi. If you go lower you will get more grip but more chance of a compression puncture.
- If you have never ridden off road before, make sure you have ridden a few miles on the road on your bike before going trail riding. This is so you get used to the bike, brakes, handling and riding on knobbles. Also wear your trail riding clothing and kit to get used to it.

Before the Ride - What Clothing & Equipment Will I Need?

Depending on the time of the year Trail riding will either be wet and muddy or dry and dusty or both!

Also there is a chance that you may fall off so you need to reduce the risk of injury to yourself (the same as if you were riding on the road!).

- Essential –
 - Moto X boots, (you need these to protect you from rocks, tree stumps, roots and when you fall off the bike)
 - Eye protection (Goggles, Visor or Safety Glasses to protect you from stones, branches and dust in the eyes).
 - Knee & Elbow protectors to protect you when you fall off
 - Waterproofs to keep the mud/rain off you.
 - Water – see below.
- Recommended –
 - Moto X type helmet & goggles, which is light and allows air to circulate
 - Body armour.
 - MX or enduro gloves as these are lighter and more comfortable than road gloves. If you can bring a spare pair of gloves as gloves get wet and muddy.
 - Camel Back or similar rucksack/drinks system will keep you hydrated and you can carry tools/spare gloves/tube/pump. Like any physical activity make sure you do not get dehydrated.
 - If you do not use a drinks system make sure you carry bottles of water with you.
You will get hot on the trail, so do not overdress.

Ride Out Information/Rules

- Turn engine off when meeting horses. - Turn the handlebars to the left when switching off engine on approaching horses as the light on modern bikes don't turn off quickly as this can spook the horse more! Horses need to judge body language. Also turning your head to left and not looking directly at a horses eye can help with being less predatory in some cases.
- The horse rider may beckon you through, follow their instructions.
- Slow down to walking pace when meeting walkers
- Opening and Closing gates. - The 2nd rider should open the gate and the last rider should close the gate.
- Line of Sight or 2nd Rider Drop Off. - There are two methods to choose, the run leader will tell you which method the group will use before you set off.
- Line of Sight - At all junctions or turnings ensure that you wait for the rider behind you.
- 2nd Rider Drop Off – The 2nd rider will wait at the junction or turning and show everyone where to turn. When everyone has gone through, they will then join the back of the group.
- If you do get lost or separated, wait where you are, we will come back for you.
- If you are a new rider, do not attempt to keep up with the more experienced riders if they are going faster than you feel comfortable with. We do not want you to have an accident, we will always wait for you at the end of the Byway or at a suitable part of the Byway.
- Your Run Leader will brief the riders before the ride and remind everyone of the rules.
- You can ask your run leader or experienced group member to check your bike before you start to ensure tyre pressure is ok, levers are in correct position etc.

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Riding Tips

Trail riding is different to riding on the road, and some of the techniques will seem alien to you. After a few rides they will feel as natural as your road riding skills.

- Stand up on the bike with your knees slightly bent, elbows bent. Trail bikes are designed to work best when the rider is standing up; look at Trials, Enduro & MX riders.
- Grip the bike with your legs.
- Look ahead so you can see what's coming up, and prepare for it.
- Use the appropriate gear for the speed/terrain, do not use too low a gear, this is a common mistake.
- You need to ride at an appropriate speed so that your bike glides over rocks, roots, etc, if you ride too slow the bike will hit these obstacles and you are more likely to fall off.
- Attending an Off road training school is a good idea before you come out trail riding, or you can ask your leader and he will give you tips before and throughout the ride.

What Maps Do I Need?

List of Ordnance Survey (OS) Maps for the main areas where we ride:

Landranger Series 1:50,000 scale

- **Dorking & Reigate. No 187**
- **Aldershot & Guildford. No 186**
- Winchester & Basingstoke. No 185
- Chichester & the Downs. No 197

Explorer Series 1:25,000 scale

- **Dorking & Reigate. No 146**
- **Guildford & Farnham. No 145**
- **Crawley & Horsham No 134**
- Basingstoke & Alton. No 144
- Winchester & the Meons. No 132.
- Haslemere & Petersfield. No 133

- The Explorer maps are more detailed and easier to read, but you would need to carry more maps with you.
- We recommend that you use a map holder to make navigating easier, and mark up the places to ride (Byways & UCRs) with a highlighter pen. Also see "Navigating with a GPS", contained later in this guide.
- You can bring your maps to club night and use our Master Maps to markup yours.

Green Road Map (GRM)

- The GRM has been created by the TRF and shows all of the places to ride across England and Wales. It is available on line, you can access the GRM via the Conservation button at the top of this page: <https://trail.trf.org.uk>
- Or go to the GRM directly via this link: <https://beta.greenroadmap.org.uk>
- Before using the GRM you will need to register by clicking the "TRF Registration" button.
- The GRM is currently in beta release, Surrey and its neighboring counties are regularly updated, but there are some counties - I think Lancashire might be an example - where the GRM can't be relied upon.

Surrey Interactive Map

- The Surrey interactive map enables you to view Ordnance Survey maps of Surrey, and display information about the location on the map.
- Available from: [Surrey interactive map - Surrey County Council \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk)

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Navigating with a GPS

- Many people use GPX files to navigate. GPX files usually contain routes that someone else has created; you can then follow the route from a dedicated GPS device such as a Garmin or a mobile phone mounted to your handlebars.
- There are a few GPX routes of Surrey available on the Group Facebook page, which you can download. You can also record routes when riding with others (always courteous to ask the run leader) and many members will share routes.
- If following other people's routes, always check that the Green Roads on your route are legal. Some routes may include bridleways, footpaths or routes which have Traffic Regulation Orders on them which, depending on the Order, may mean they cannot be lawfully used on a motorbike.
- The most popular iPhone/Android app is Outdooractive (was ViewRanger). It allows you to download Ordnance Survey mapping, you can purchase map tiles or it is relatively inexpensive to download both 1:25K and 1:50K maps for the whole UK. There are plenty of other apps out there that people use for route planning and navigation including the Ordnance Survey's OS Maps App and OsmAnd.
- If you are using your phone you will need a way of mounting it to the bike - Ultimate Addons, QuadLock and RAM Mount are popular brands. Some people also wire in a USB power supply from their bike's battery.
- The group has plenty of navigation and GPX experts so ask if you need any advice or help.

Club Night

We meet: the fourth Tuesday of each month, 8.00 - 10.30pm.

Ripley British Legion, 25 Rose Lane, Ripley, Woking, Surrey, GU23 6NE

Come along and say Hello, we are happy to talk and answer any questions that you have.

Joining the TRF

- You can try out trail riding with the Surrey TRF group without joining the TRF. But if you enjoy the run & want to continue riding with us we would expect you to join the TRF.
- Join on line from the National TRF web site. (Also linked from the Surrey TRF web site)
- When you have joined the TRF please let us know by saying hello on our Facebook group. See contacts section.

Contact Details

- Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/SurreyTRF>
- Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/surreytrf>
- South London & Surrey TRF Group web site <http://www.surreytrf.org.uk/>
- National TRF web site <http://www.trf.org.uk/>

Facebook

- Most online interaction happen on our Facebook Group - this is the Group link <https://www.facebook.com/groups/surreytrf>
- The Group is open to fully paid TRF members and you'll be required to provide your membership number to get access.
- You will find all the usual discussion as well as details of runs in the Events section.