

A Quick guide to getting started in Hillclimbing and Sprinting

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Hillclimbs and sprints are cheap and easy ways to get into motorsport, using, pretty much, whatever car you drive.

So what is hillclimbing and sprinting? Hillclimbs and sprints are basically the same discipline and are referred to as speed events. And let's clear one thing up, hillclimbing is **NOT** driving a car up a muddy hill, that's Trials. Speed events are timed laps of a circuit or a up a hillclimb track. They are about the oldest form of motorsport and originated in France over 100 years ago. Cars are run one at a time, so the sport is relatively safe as you only have yourself to blame for an accident. Events are all run on solid surfaces, tarmac or concrete, and involve a standing start and a flying finish. You will

learn more about the format of events later in this booklet. Speed events are a great way into motorsport, but many get hooked and never move on. If you want to drive fast in a competitive environment and a friendly atmosphere then this is what speed events are all about. There is one more thing worth mentioning at this point and that is that two drivers can share one car at any event. Sharing a car will likely reduce your event costs and if you're not competitive in the class, you will always be racing someone with the same equipment - so no excuses!



OVERVIEW

The following sections will guide you through all the basic steps required in order to go hillclimbing and sprinting. We have tried to cover all the basics but you may require more reading on some sections especially when it comes to preparing your car to meet the specific regulations for the



respective class. Hopefully by reading this guide you will gain enough knowledge to get you on the road to your first event. It is important to state at the outset that the definitive guide to rules and regulations is laid out in the Motor Sports Association (MSA) Competitors Year Book or 'Blue Book' as it is more commonly referred to. You will receive a copy of the Blue Book when you get your competition licence, but it is also available online www.msauk.org

In addition, organisers of Championships and the Events themselves publish Supplementary Regulations, which must also be followed before being able to take to the track.

What Cars Can be Used?

Speed events allow a large variety of cars to compete, ranging from production cars (with varying levels of modifications) and all types of kit cars through to single seaters (which can range from Formula Fords and motorbike-engined specials to £50,000+ 600bhp machines). Very few types of cars are excluded from speed events.

As a beginner with no racing experience and a 'B' Class licence (see how to get one in the licence section) you will be able to drive all types of production

and kit cars but will be limited to a 2.0 litre engine capacity in single seater and sports libre classes. The licence limit is changing to 1100cc in 2018. If you want to use a road going car, and many people do, be that

your weekend toy or everyday road car, then you will need it to satisfy a number of safety and competition requirements covered in section S of the blue book. They are summarised on the next page.





Race number

Timing Strut

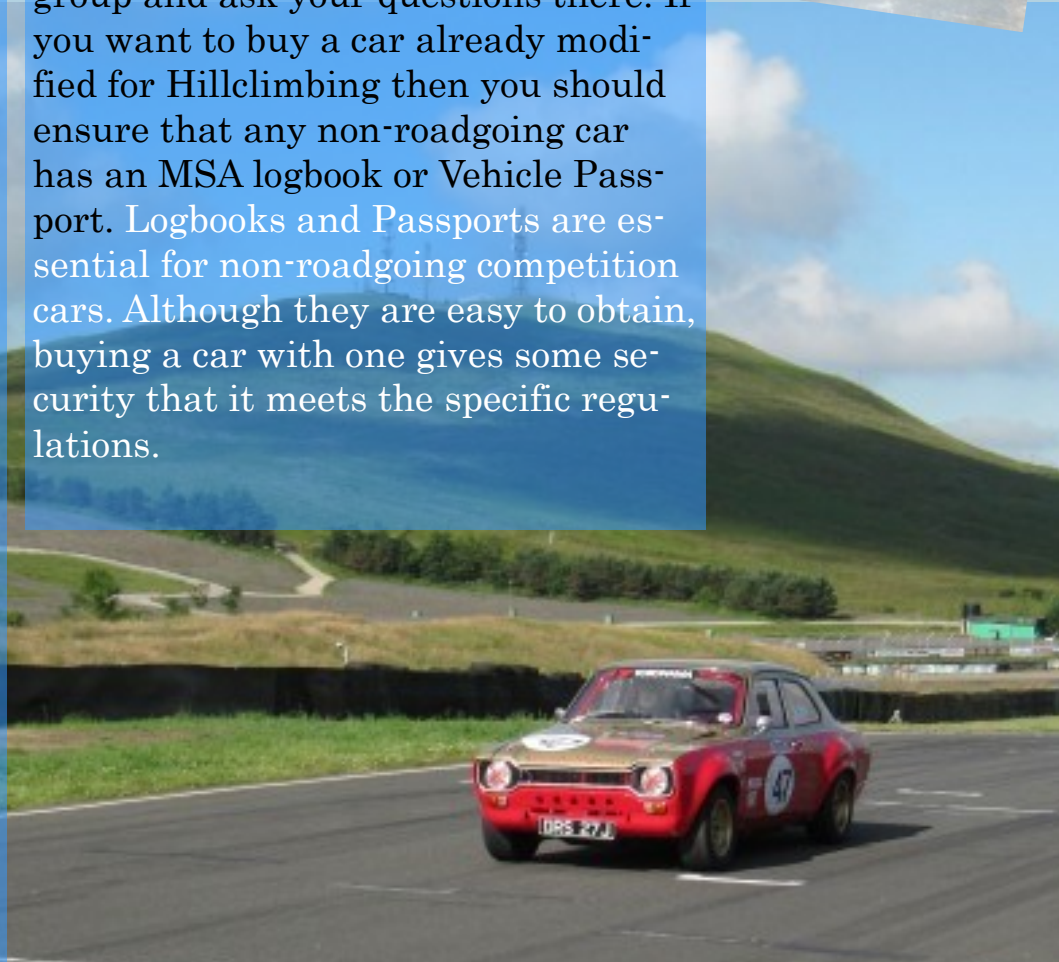
1. A sticker on the ignition key or cut out switch indicating which way to turn it off.
2. A yellow battery earth cable.
3. Your race number on the sides of the car and a timing strut
4. A generally good-condition car.
5. In a roadgoing class the car must:
 - Have a valid MOT, road tax and insurance.
 - Have the full interior fitted.
 - If your car is built in quantities of less than 1000 per year then it will require a roll cage.
6. Cars with non-original engine type will be in Sports Libre.



Modifying Your Car

If you want to modify a car or build a non-roadgoing car then the MSA requirements are a lot more involved. The regulations are all in the 'Blue Book' under section S. Speaking to other competitors is a great way to get the information you need. The HSA has members competing in most classes and someone should be able to help you. So either come along to an event and have a chat, use the 'Ask and Expert' feature on the HSA website or join the Facebook

group and ask your questions there. If you want to buy a car already modified for Hillclimbing then you should ensure that any non-roadgoing car has an MSA logbook or Vehicle Passport. Logbooks and Passports are essential for non-roadgoing competition cars. Although they are easy to obtain, buying a car with one gives some security that it meets the specific regulations.



Personal Safety Equipment

The minimum you require is a helmet, fireproof overalls and a pair of fireproof gloves; all these items must meet the required specifications as laid out in the MSA Year Book for the current year. In non-roadgoing cars, racing cars and sports libre cars you will also need a FHR (Frontal Head Restraint, often referred to as HANS) and a suitable helmet with HANS posts.

Additionally you can buy fireproof underwear, balaclavas and racing boots; these are not required, but it's all added safety. Anyone selling such equipment should be able to help you out.

Helmet



FHR (H.A.N.S)



Nomex suit



Gloves

Optional boots



Getting a Racing Licence

All UK race licences are issued by the MSA. As a beginner you will need a "non-race National B" licence. In most instances you will require no medical, just your doctor's name and address and then a passport photo of yourself. The licence lasts for 1 year from January 1st to December 31st.

Once you start competing, you can get your licence upgraded by getting it signed at events to say that you competed in a safe and satisfactory manner.

Why do I Need to Join a Car Club and why the HSA is Ideal

To gain entry to events you will need to be 'invited'. This basically means that events are only open to members of clubs or specific championship competitors. Who is invited to an event is listed in the supplementary regulations issued with entry forms by the organising club. Of course, not all events are open to all clubs and championships.

The HSA, as a national club, is invited to many speed events throughout the year and throughout the country. The HSA Speed Championship visits many of the best Hillclimb and Spint venues in the country and is an ideal way to get invited to enter such events.



Entering Events

Assuming that you now are a member of a club invited to your chosen event and you have a licence, some safety gear and an eligible car then you are ready to enter.

First you need to get an entry form. Many clubs now accept entries on-line. Some others you will need to fill in a form and post it. In all cases forms and event details will be available on the organising club's website.

The HSA has a list of all invited events and an map showing where some of the most popular courses are on the website. There are a number of things to watch out for when completing forms or on-line registrations. All events have opening and closing dates for entries, although as some of the most popular events are over subscribed you are not guaranteed an entry. It is good advice to enter as early possible as many clubs have a first come first served policy.



Sharing a Car

Speed events are unique in that two people can share a car at one event. This an ideal way to start competing as lots of costs are shared and although you might not be the fastest in your class at least you can compete with your co-driver.

As far as entry to events goes, both drivers will be required to fill in a form and pay the entry fee. There will be a section on the entry form to indicate that you are sharing the drive and a place to name the other driver.

Useful Links

www.hillclimbandsprint.co.uk
www.msauk.org

Hillclimb Schools

www.harewoodhill.com/
www.gurstondown.org/
www.bugatti.co.uk
www.shelsley-walsh.co.uk/
www.hdlcc.com/



What to do on the day

Before each event you will be sent Final Instructions, usually by email. These will tell you things like:

- Where the event is and how to get there
- What time the gates are open.
- What time scrutineering is
- What time signing-on commences
- An agenda for the rest of the meeting
- When you can walk the course
- Most importantly, who you will be competing against.

Signing-on: You need to take yourself, your licence and any club and championship ID cards to the signing on office. Every event seems to have a different method for how this works, but all are generally explained in the final instructions. If in doubt someone at the event will know.

Scrutineering: Your car and personal safety kit will need to be inspected by an MSA Scrutineer. These generally come to you and are not to be feared. They are there to ensure that your car and safety kit are up to standard.

Drivers' briefing: before some events all the drivers will be called to a meeting where the Clerk of the Course will explain how the day is to be run and what is expected of everybody. Make sure you attend, especially if you are a new driver.

Walking the course: It is encouraged for first timers to walk the course, however, you will find that even the most seasoned competitors will walk the course in the morning.

Finally the Racing

Once all this is completed you're ready to compete. You will be called by race number to the start line (or invariably the start line queue). When it is your turn you will need to drive to the start line where the marshals will line your timing splitter up with the timing equipment. Then you just have to wait for the green light and off you go. A point of note is that the green light does not indicate that the timing has started, merely that the course is clear for you to go. You can therefore take your time and go when you are ready. Don't take too long though marshals can get impatient!

