

VSCDA DRIVING SCHOOL

CAR PREPARATION RECOMMENDATIONS

An important factor in making your driving school experience fun and successful is having your car completely prepared for the school and race weekend. The school “on track” day is very busy with little time to “fix” your car and you must complete the sessions in order to pass the school.

Each year we have students who come to school with mechanical or safety issues which should have been addressed before they left home. Be sure to double check all of your cars' safety equipment and your personal safety equipment. Take the time to completely prepare your car for the school before you leave home. We highly recommended that you bring someone to maintain your car between on track sessions, since you, the driver, will be extremely busy!

NUMBERS:

All race cars must carry numbers at least 8” to 10” high with 1-1/2” to 2” stroke on a contrasting background. Numbers must appear on all four sides of the car (except for formula cars, which do not carry numbers on the rear). [After graduating, novices must identify their car with an additional “X” on all four sides of the car for their first three races.]

SAFETY:

Your car does not have to be 100% race legal for school, but it must be 100% safe. *If you are running the race weekend the following day, you will need to have a race legal car.* If possible, bring your car to one of the pre-weekend inspections or try to have a technical inspector (or a competitor with a similar car) come to your home and check everything so you have time to make corrections before school. Make certain your belts are current. Make sure that your mirrors are mounted so you have a reasonable field of view. Have all of your personal safety equipment ready including current helmet, neck restraint device, driver suit and fire-resistant underwear with no holes, approved gloves and shoes and arm restraints if required for your car. If you do not have a logbook for the car, you can get one at Tech.

SEATING:

To control a race car, you must be firmly seated in the seat and not use the steering wheel or the pedals in order to maintain balance or support! When fully and tightly belted in, the driver must be able to reach the steering wheel and rotate it fully without losing grip and depress the pedals fully without their back or butt moving off the seat. Of critical importance is that when the belts are fully tightened, the lap belt crosses the pelvis- NOT the stomach and that the shoulder belts are at the correct angle back to their attachment points (see General Competition Regulations) and that they do not crush the air from your lungs! Your safety is greatly compromised if belts are not correctly fitted and your driving performance is hugely compromised if you are using the control surfaces to hold yourself in place or if you can't comfortably operate the controls while locked down in your belts!

NUTS & BOLTS:

Check every nut and bolt in the car. By applying a dab of yellow paint to the nut/thread juncture, if something starts to loosen (and it will) the paint cracks and the change is visible.

Be certain to check lug bolt tightness after every session and after removing the car from your trailer (lug nuts often loosen in towing transit!)

ENGINE COOLANT:

Antifreeze must never be used in race cars. If antifreeze spills on the racing surface, it is extremely slippery and almost invisible. This will cause a dangerous situation for you and your fellow drivers. Use water in all race engines, perhaps with Redline water wetter (or similar) to help lower water temperature.

ENGINE:

If you have a choice, use a stock, broken-in engine, as opposed to a highly tuned racing engine, for your school. While not as fast, it is dependable. You want to learn how to drive rather than play race mechanic at the school.

TIRES:

Don't spend money on the latest trick race tires for school. A reasonably fresh set of heat cycled tires will last longer and may feel more predictable.

MOST COMMON ERRORS FOUND IN INITIAL TECH INSPECTION:

1. Battery not firmly mounted, terminals not insulated.
2. Insufficient tire clearance due to suspension/body work
3. No fan (race cars overheat at low speeds- you may remove after school)
4. Restrictive fuel filter, spark plugs too cold (try stock for school)
5. No captive washers on front suspension, rear radius rods.
6. Inferior bolts (use at least grade 5 or grade 8).
7. Unsoldered electric wires, wires breaking from vibration (use wire ties)
8. Loose lug nuts, missing clamps on oil, fuel, or water lines.
9. Open holes through the firewall
10. Insufficient number/strength of springs on throttle linkages

This is by no means a complete list of possible issues we have seen come up during school. Please reach out to the office with any questions now, to assure a fun and less stressed school experience.