

STARTING A CLUB

Forming a high school cycling club is easier than you probably think. Here is a basic outline of a few key steps along the way to starting a successful high school cycling club. (This information is aimed at adults looking to form a club, as any student club will almost certainly need an adult sponsor along the way. If you're a student interested in forming a club, your first step should be to team up with an adult cyclist in the community or find a staff member at your school with a passion for cycling.)

• Get Permission

Talk with school administration / get approval to recruit

Before doing anything, it's always a good idea to talk to the school administration first. This is not to gain permission to form a club so much as to simply do a litmus test, gauging interest among students. If you already have a small group of interested students you may be able to skip this step however it is also a good way to initiate the conversation of high school cycling with the school. It is also a good time to ask what it takes to form a new club at that school.

• Gather Support

Find interested students

Forming a high school club is always easier if there is interest among existing students. Chances are good that whether anyone knows it or not, there are at least one or two students interested in some form of cycling, whether it's Road, Mountain, Cyclocross, Track, BMX, or casual rides with their friends or family. Remember, cycling is not yet the coolest thing in high school (but it will be), so many students do not make their interest in cycling obvious; find those students and make cycling something they can be proud of. Additionally, high schools tend to be student-focused (for good reason) and are therefore most responsive to student interest, so if a group of students want a cycling club, the school will be more apt to listen.

Feel free to contact the 331 Racing High School League with any questions about racing or starting a team. We are happy to help you organize a new high school team.

Membership is free for all new high school clubs for the first year and \$50 per year each subsequent year. You can register your club by filling out the following two forms and emailing, mailing, or faxing them to USA Cycling via the contact information found on the forms themselves:

High School Membership Application
High School Club Eligibility Form.



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High School Mountain Bike League



WELCOME TO BIKE RACING

Competitive cycling has seen dramatic growth in the U.S. in recent years, with individual teams sprouting up all across the country, and larger, fully-fledged leagues and race series coming together in several states and regions, as well. Many high school clubs and organizations have utilized USA Cycling's existing network of experienced coaches, clubs, race organizers, and local associations to form these organizations, but we are also constantly working to tailor our resources to this emerging segment of USA Cycling members.

This informational brochure outlines what is needed to get cycling going as a high school club sport, with more resources and information on the way in the future at <http://www.usacycling.org/highschool>

Find interested and supportive parents

Just having interested students isn't enough, though. Parents with a vested interest in their child's participation in the club are essential to the short- and long-term success of the club. On an even more basic level than volunteer roles to help structure the club, supportive parents are necessary for the logistics of signing their child's waivers, getting them to practices and races, and financially backing their child's new hobby, especially with the cost of equipment.

Find interested adults in the community

Local cyclists willing to lend their experience and sport specific knowledge, as well as hand-me-down equipment are a great asset to any team. In the ideal case you have a group of interested students and some parents and adult volunteers willing to help with the structure and organization. It is helpful when the interested parents and students have the additional help and resources that can be provided by these other adults in the community with cycling experience.

Find an interested staff or faculty member

Most schools require a school employee to serve as an official club sponsor for any club or activity to be officially sanctioned by the school. It is even possible, in some cases, for schools to allow this person to be a moderator in name only while parents, students, and other qualified adults actually run the club or at least do the 'heavy lifting' of running a club.

• Make it Official

Secure official recognition and approval from the school

Each school and district will have a slightly different process for securing official recognition as a new school club but many, if not most, of the requirements are quite similar. Typically, there is a standard form that needs to be filled out and this form requires things like the name and signature of the faculty sponsor, the official name of the club, the purpose or mission statement of the club, information on the club officer positions and sometimes the names of the

student leaders, basic information about the club structure and activities such as what type of meetings will be held, when, how often, etc. and finally, most schools require a list of names and signatures from a minimum number of students interested in creating the new club.

One important thing to keep in mind is that at the start, the only interest the administration needs to show is openness to the idea of a new cycling club. Student interest coupled with the sound structure and support you will give the club assisted by the support structure provided by USA Cycling should do the rest.

Register with USA Cycling as an official USAC High School cycling club

Registering the club with USA Cycling is a key part of the process for many reasons. Being an official member club with USA Cycling can add legitimacy to the club in the eyes of students, parents, and administration. Membership with the National Governing Body of cycling can help assuage many of the concerns the administration may have about approving a high school cycling club. Membership also makes certain member benefits available to the club and its members such as discounts on cycling and insurance products through USA Cycling's Affinity Partners. Read more about the benefits of USA Cycling membership [here](#).

Membership with USA Cycling provides access to an existing nation-wide support structure including [licensed coaches](#), [Local Associations](#), and [USA Cycling staff support](#). Membership also allows the club to host sanctioned races, official club practices, camps, and non-competitive events. Permitting these events with USA Cycling provides liability protection, rules structure and access to a network of licensed officials. A USAC permit also enables your club members to be part of USA Cycling's results and rankings system and feed into the National Development Program. Additionally, membership with USA Cycling allows for the club to purchase general liability insurance.



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Becoming a Coach

USA Cycling offers a certification and licensing program for cycling coaches, with a [discount for new coaches from high school programs](#). This program certifies that the coach is versed not only in the basics of coaching cyclists, but is up to date on continuing education units and the latest information available to coaches. Additionally, every licensed USA Cycling coach has passed a criminal background check, which provides high schools with added peace of mind. Complete details on this program are available [here](#).

Insurance Information

USA Cycling, Inc. has general liability and rider accident insurance that covers events for which a permit has been issued. This insurance covers Road, Track, Mountain Biking, and Cyclo-cross events. Complete information on this and other insurance programs are available [here](#).

In addition, all high school clubs are eligible to purchase additional club general liability insurance. This additional insurance provides coverage with a liability limit of \$1 million for clubs during cycling-related club activities, such as awards banquets, meetings, approved fundraisers, and club training rides that are not sanctioned by USA Cycling. Complete information on this program is available [here](#).

Finding an Existing High School Cycling Club

To find a high school team, you can check the USA Cycling database of clubs [here](#). Keep in mind that some high school clubs are actually leagues with individual clubs registered within those leagues. To find those teams, click on "details" next to the league name.