



TRIATHLON

Transition Part 1

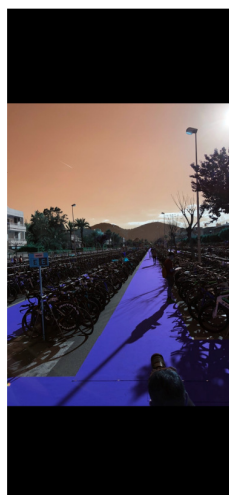
When I decided to break down each discipline I wondered where to start and considered swim as we always say 'Swim, bike run'. However before you even start your event the first thing you will do is set up all of your equipment in the transition area.

When you look at triathlon results you will see times for T1 and T2 - in a regular triathlon T1 refers to transition from swim to bike and T2 from bike to run.

Split	Time			Accumulative Positions (from start)			Split Positions (from prev. split or leg)		
	From Start	From Start	Time of Day	Overall	Category	Gender	Overall	Category	Gender
Swim	24:24.5	24:24.5	6:44:24.5	2	1	1	2	1	1
T1	26:35.8	2:11.3	6:46:35.8	2	1	1	18	16	16
Bike	2:42:27.5	2:15:51.6	9:02:27.5	1	1	1	1	1	1
T2	2:43:27.4	59.9	9:03:27.4	2	2	2	4	3	3
Run	4:09:29.0	1:26:01.5	10:29:29.0	1	1	1	6	4	6

In some events T1 and T2 are in different locations - however most of the time it is in just one place. And yes unfortunately transition times are part of your overall time!

Transition areas vary in size and set up depending on the race. For local sprint and standard distance events the transition area is about the size of a tennis court - but the bigger events have huge transition areas - the transition area for Ironman/Ironman 70.3 Mallorca is 1/4 mile long!



In smaller events it is usual to have all of your kit next to your bike- either in a bag or a box - check the instructions for each race as some do not allow boxes - and all will say to keep your kit to a minimum. You will also 'change' next to your bike - which is where a trisuit is great as no nudity is allowed !

Larger events may have changing areas and bags provided for your kit - a bike and a run bag.



You need to take your bag and get changed and then replace your bag before, collecting your bike or just exiting for the run. This sounds more complicated than it actually is.

So what do you need and what do you need to consider for transition? Swim to bike

How far is it ? And what is the terrain like to get from the swim exit to transition?

Usually for sea swims you are running on sand, and lake swims maybe grass, so this is not so problematic, but for events with pool swims you may be running on concrete, there may be steps etc. Many people have no issue with this and 'just get on with it. Personally I am a bit of a wimp, so I usually have a pair of trainers to run to transition in. (An old pair - rather than the ones I will do my run in).It takes seconds to get them on but does allow you to run a bit faster to the transition area without fear of hurting your feet - but this is personal preference.

If the swim is a sea swim with a beach run it may be worth having a small bowl of water next to your bike (if allowed) just to get the sand off - otherwise talcum powder is amazing at getting rid of sand - and a small towel. Personally I take a coloured /patterned bright towel so that it stands out - it sounds crazy but it is easy to 'lose your bike' in the transition area as it all looks a bit of a blur as you run in.

You also need any additional clothing/footwear that you are going to use on the bike. If you have worn just a swimsuit to swim in you can just pull your cycles shorts and top on over the top. If you are just wearing a trisuit you are ready to go - you just need to add your shoes helmet and race number.

Obviously if you have been wearing a wetsuit this is after you have wrestled yourself out of this - definitely worth practising!

I am now going to address the elephant in the room early on - SOCKS! - oh there have been many discussions about this - certainly in my household and I'm sure in many others up and down the country. So socks or no socks? - The no sock team will tell you they aren't necessary and it wastes time getting them on..... Again this comes down to personal preference and some people may change their approach depending on the length of the race - so no sock for sprint distances but socks for Half and Full distance ironman.

Whether you are using socks or not though -talcum powder is really helpful in getting socks and shoes on and it dries your feet off - and lets be honest who doesn't like the smell of baby powder!

From swim to bike you obviously need your cycle helmet - (which you MUST put on AND fasten before you un rack your bike. Sunglasses - if required , cycle shoes and race number.

You will notice that some people attach their cycle shoes to their bike and do some magic with elastic bands to hold them in place, they then jump onto their bikes and do their shoes up whilst riding. This is something that certainly needs practise and to start off with most people put their shoes on and run with their bike to the mount line. (I have some great videos for this for the bike section)



This photo shows shoes already attached to bike.

With regards to your race number - you don't wear this for the swim (hence you may have your number drawn on you or have temporary tattoos.)

The easiest way to wear your race number is by using a race belt which you put your number on before the race and then either step into the belt or clip it round you at the time. This does away with the need for pins, and makes transition from bike to run quick too. As for the bike leg your number should be displayed on your back and for the run on your front.



You can also get race belts with a little pocket or elastic loops which you can carry gels/fuel in.

If you feel you need to for longer races you may want to have a quick drink and some food in transition (although a full on picnic is frowned upon) so that you know you have taken on decent nutrition as sometimes fuelling on the bike/run can be difficult.

Bike to Run Transition

Following the bike section you run into transition - rack your bike (you MUST do this BEFORE you unfasten and remove your helmet). Change into your run gear - again if you are wearing a trisuit there is no need to change. Put your 'socks' and shoes on turn your race number around and away you go.

A really useful addition to your tri kit when it comes to running shoes is elastic or 'lock laces'. These mean that you can just put your shoes on , pull them to the desired tension and go - no doing up laces in transition and no worries about laces coming undone on the run!



So that is transition - all pretty straight forward? Well it is if you plan, prepare and practise. I know practising may seem a little strange but it is certainly worth doing - it will help you stay calm on the day and also find a routine that you can use that works for you.

I try to use a top to bottom - bottom to top approach , which means when I am taking things off I work from my head to my feet and putting things on from my feet to my head.

But different things work for different people.

Although as we have said it is important to keep your kit to a minimum in transition below is a list of things that may be useful to have and some things you definitely don't need.

- ✓ Additional nutrition and fluid
- ✓ Sunscreen
- X Picnic
- X Mirror (I have included this as a certain Trotter has done this - can you guess who?)
- X Folding chair (I read that one in an article so someone has clearly tried it)
- ✓ Toilet paper/tissue (You never know)
- ✓ Bin bag to cover your kit if it is raining

The more organised and practised you are the slicker and quicker you will be. This is much more important in the shorter races that most people start off with.

So after this rather long spiel about transition I will summarise with some bullet points - tips and tricks and a final video.

- ★ You will be allocated your space in transition - make a mental note of where this is and remember your race number! It is useful in larger transitions to try to find a landmark that you can pick out and as I said earlier using a bright towel can help. ★ When you rack your bike put it in the gear you are going to need when you first get on it. Is the course flat out of transition or is it uphill?
- ★ Have your bike computer on your bike and ready to go
- ★ Talc - wo(mans) best friend - (That and vaseline!)
- ★ Put your wetsuit on over your timing chip (which is usually worn on your left ankle - so that it doesn't get caught when you are getting your wetsuit off) ★ Know your way in and out of transition - visualise your route
- ★ Don't panic!

