



POWRi Novice Program

Novice Procedures

The Novice Class is to train new drivers to understand basic racing rules and to be able to handle themselves and cars in a safe manner. **The Novice class is not for perfecting racing skills, abilities, or techniques.** Extended competitive racing in the Novice Class once the fundamentals are learned is not to be allowed.

- a. The Novice program is divided into two groups. The Red Novice for age 5- 8 years of age and the Blue Novice for age 9-15 years of age is intended to orient the child with safety, communication, and racing procedures so that they understand what is expected of them before they enter the track, while on the track and leaving the track. When they have displayed their understanding of these basics, they move to phase two of the Novice training.
- b. The minimum age for a Novice will be five years for racing and four and one half years for practice and training only. (4 ½ year old may not practice or train during an event)
- c. Each Novice handler, upon joining a club shall present the drivers birth certificate to the Secretary of the club and the "official age" of the driver shall be entered in the permanent records of the club.
- d. A novice will be issued a logbook and Novice Driver's Card from the POWRi office.
- e. A driver may be moved to the Honda 120/Animal/Jr 160 class at any time directed by the Club President or Novice Director.

Novice Training

- a. Novice Training by a competent instructor must be completed by all new drivers. Minor changes can be made to this outline to conform to local conditions. Any driver not trained by the clubs Novice Trainers must pass a test given by his local Club's Novice Committee before he enters into the Novice Class. The Novice driver must be a POWRi member to be covered by club insurance during training periods.
- b. Purpose of Novice Training Program
 1. Instruct drivers in the basic procedures of Quarter Midget racing.
 2. Promote driver safety from a driver's viewpoint.
 3. Offer all drivers an opportunity to improve their driving techniques and skills through non-competitive practice sessions with qualified adult supervision.
 4. Train new drivers AND handlers in driver safety and track safety.

Instructor's Guide

1. Novice trainees, especially juniors, have limited concentration and stamina. Each phase of instruction should be limited to a maximum of 15 minutes at a time, followed by a short break and/or an actual on-track practice.
2. Novice trainees should not be allowed onto the racing surface until the instructor has made sure that every precaution has been taken to ensure the Novice trainee's safety. Each car should be safety checked to be sure that all equipment is installed and working correctly. Extra attention should be paid to the on/off switch, (location, operation) safety belts, brakes, roll cage (proper clearance). New handlers often have little experience with race cars or safety equipment.

3. The Novice Trainee should be completely instructed on how to stop the car safely in the event of trouble or unease with car speed. Novice Trainees should have a full understanding of all flags and hand signals prior to driving on the track. The meaning of the red, yellow, and black flags is VERY important, as well as where you want the Novice Trainee to stop when shown a red flag. The Novice Trainee should be shown that the steering wheel is his or her **"BEST FRIEND"**, and that they should only take their hands off of it when operating the on/off switch or signaling to leave the track. Gently roll the car over on its side while they are belted in the car to carefully show them that they can't "Hold Up" the car or prevent a rollover. This procedure can make many Novice Trainees nervous, so assure them that they are safe, and remind them to never take their hands off the wheel. Let the Novice Trainee know that you are not interested in how fast they can go in the initial training sessions but want to get them used to the car being in motion and how to handle the car. Don't push speed on them, but whatever speed they drive at, try to have them remain at a consistent speed and not "let up" or "Breathe it" in the corners. For some drivers, it may be helpful to limit the gas pedal travel for the first few training sessions, especially with bringing along an apprehensive driver as well as an overly aggressive one.
4. The instructor must always remember that he/she is dealing with children and keep all explanations as simple as possible. Small whiteboards with dry erase markers are a valuable tool in explaining situations, as are small die cast cars. Novice Trainees need to build confidence in both themselves and their cars. Whenever possible, praise can bring results far greater than the instructor's expectations. The instructor must have great patience when the Novice Trainee has had repeated mistakes or has trouble understanding the subject matter at hand. Additional patience and attention will be needed with younger trainees. To keep a Novice Trainee's attention, you will have to meet them halfway by becoming their friend, but still remain aloof enough to command their respect. Keep the conversation on their level, but don't talk down to them. Find time to know the trainee, find out their fears and appreciate them as being quite real in their minds, while working to alleviate them with rational explanations. Build up their confidence by passing yours on to them.
5. Parents should be encouraged to attend, participate, and listen to all verbal instruction, and to ask questions whenever they are unsure or don't understand any instruction or point. Parents should NEVER be allowed onto the track while their child is driving. This tends to make the Novice Trainee self-conscious and prevents them from fully concentrating on doing their best. Parents cheering can be distracting enough to cause an accident. Further, parents need instruction themselves on how and when to enter the racing surface.

Helpful Training Tips

6. Pylons – Novice Trainees can be helped immensely by the use of pylons. Use pylons in the first training session on track to establish the driving pattern. Twelve pylons are recommended for this lesson. (See Illustration below) One pylon is placed on either side of the track in the straight-aways, approximately 7-8 paces from the wall and in the centers of the straight-aways. One pylon should be placed in each corner, about a car width up from the infield line towards the center. Place the remaining 8 pylons in 4 "gates" of two pylons, between each corner and straight away. Basically, the cones will direct the Novice Trainee around the racing "groove" in a proper pattern. Instruct the Novice trainee that they are to drive around the outside of the pylons in the middle of each straight away, in between the "gate" pylons, and as close to the infield line in the corners, inside that pylon. Again, this puts the Novice Trainee in a good pattern, and helps to eliminate the usual corner pinching that is common with new drivers. It also helps to "walk" the Novice Trainee around the track in the pattern that you want them to learn.
7. These tips are shown as aids in the instruction of the Novice Trainee. Other demonstrations and instruction may be devised. However, caution and safety must always be at the forefront. Nothing should be done that will cause the Novice Trainee to lose confidence. Don't make tests too difficult, and even if a driver fails a test the first few times, first point out what was done correctly and offer praise, while gently pointing out the mistakes in a friendly manner.

Flags, Hand Signals and Safety

Flags

- a. Every Novice Trainee & handler MUST know the meaning and color of each flag. A Novice Trainee should not be allowed on the track until they have shown they know the meaning of each flag. Let them know that flags and hand signals are the only way handlers and officials can communicate with them while the car is moving on the track.

RED	Stop Immediately
YELLOW	Caution, Slow Down, No Passing
GREEN	Start, Increase Speed, Go
BLACK	Disqualified, Go To Pits
WHITE	One Lap to Go, Take One Lap
CHECKERED	Race is complete
GREEN & YELLOW	Held Vertically and Parallel, One In Each Hand Denotes "Form-Up" Side By Side For Original Start. Held Together In One Hand Overhead Denotes Restart In Single File.
BLACK and YELLOW	All Cars Slow Down and Exit Track

Hand Signals and Their Meanings

- b. Novice Trainees must be able to recognize these important Hand signals. Give examples of the use of each hand signal:
- Finger drawn across throat in slashing motion** - Turnoff switch and stop.
 - Handheld flat in downward motion** - Slow down.
 - Thumb and index finger in open/close motion** - Give it more throttle.
 - Any flag held in furled position w/one or more fingers held above it** – Take number of laps indicated by fingers, then take action required by flag.
 - Arms extended to the front in an opening & closing motion** - Move in or out as indicated.
 - Hand or flag pointing to rear end** - Move to the back of the pack.

The Car and Safety

Safety Equipment and Its Purpose

Switch	Location and purpose.
Brake	Operation and purpose. Safety Belt
Helmet	Reasons for use, how tight?
Visor	What type, why & when worn, how snug?
Jacket	What type, why & when worn.
Roll Cage	What type, why they are required
Gloves	Purpose: height.
Fire Wall	Purpose: what type used.
Bumpers	Purpose: why it must be extended below belly pan.
Nerf Bars	Purpose: importance of not having any brokenparts. Purpose: importance of not having any broken Parts

Car Safety, Dos and Do Nots

- The car is definitely not a toy. It is not to be played with in the usual sense of the word.
- Obey the flagger. He is in charge out on the track. Do not take signals from the pit area **during an event.**
(Explain why: disqualification, taking eyes away from track can cause accidents, etc.)
- Keep in mind what you are doing...not what you did last week or what you will do tomorrow.
- Do not watch or wave to the spectators, mom, or dad. Keep your eyes on what is happening on the track in front of you.
- Do not chew gum or candy while driving. If involved in an accident, you could choke.
- Before leaving the pit area for the track, always check your safety equipment to be sure it is in operating condition. Be sure your visor is clean and pulled down. Your helmet must be tight. Be sure your safety belts, neck collar, and gloves are tight. When checking your belts try to pull the lap belt first then the driver's right side shoulder belt then the driver's left side shoulder belt.
- When tightening your lap belts snug them up enough that you cannot get your finger under them. No more than one or two fingers under the belts under your shoulder belts.
 - Check your RaceCeiver to make sure that you can hear clearly
 - Always keep your switch in the "off" position when the car is not in use.
 - Do not remain in the car during refueling operation.
 - Drivers should be cautioned to keep elbows and hands inside the car at all times.

When leaving the pit area and coming out onto the track:

- Look for other cars already on the track; do not break into flow of traffic stay above white line.
- If flagger is on duty, await their signal before coming out onto the track.
- Do not drop into the flow of traffic already on the track. Let the pack go by before dropping down to run your pattern.
- Do not "play" with other drivers on the track. "Fooling around" can cause accidents.
- Tell your handler, should they attempt to refuel you on the track that they can refuel only in the pits, and only with driver out of car.
- If someone is standing in the on chute or pit lane area – **STOP;** do not run him or her over.

When leaving the track to enter the pit area:

- Look quickly behind you for other cars before turning out of the traffic pattern.
- Hold left hand up on the inside to signal to other drivers that you are pulling out and going to pits.
- After leaving the traffic pattern, move up to the wall and follow it around until you reach the entrance.
- The car handler should be waiting at the pit entrance for his driver.
- Upon reaching the pit entrance, drive slowly to pit position, turn off switch and apply brake. Be sure to allow room for any other cars that may also want to exit the track.
- Watch out for other drivers, handlers, and cars as you go to your pit position.

Safety in the Pit Area

- Fuel & Extinguishers: Before practice or racing make sure all fire extinguishers are in their proper location.
- Whenever a car is being refueled, the driver is to leave car and stand to one side – this applies at all times. Handlers should not smoke while refueling.
- There will be no refueling on the track or in the "infield". Refuel in the pit area only.
- Playing and/or rough housing: No playing in the pit area or out on the track. Drivers could be hit by cars, etc.
- Always stay near your car unless you have permission from your handler to leave the area. Always tell your handler where you will be...you could miss an event.
- When watching the program always remain "behind" the fence. Do not sit on exposed walls at the entrance to the track or pit area.
- Do not attempt to help push a car off/onto the track. Let the adult handler or owner tend to that chore.

On-Track Training Procedures

1. Set up pylons/cones as shown in illustration
2. Test your Novice Trainee's knowledge of the meanings of the flags. Explain the basic hand signals to your students.
3. Track Walk. Explain: (Instructor/Driver only).
 - a. Staging area line-up, point out driver/handler only line, never drive into staging area, etc.
 - b. Describe hot chute/pit area parking according to number.
 - c. Begin walking out onto track "on chute", point out flagging positions for practice/qualifying, point out white "blend line" STAYABOVE!!
 - d. Join pattern through gate pylons, point out where instructor would like student to drive around outside of straightaway pylon, through next gate, below turn pylon, etc. During walk ask driver where they think they should go next to see if they are getting the idea. If needed walk 1 or 2 more times around.
 - e. Show driver how to leave the track. Demonstrate the hand signal and where to drive, high in turns, etc. When leaving track have hand on switch ready to stop.
 - f. Show where to park/stop to get ready for qualifying, and where to stop to leave pits – "pit gate".
4. **Suit up driver: In car talk. After belting in:**
 - a. Describe steering wheel as the driver's best friend, "buddy". "You never let go of your buddy unless you need to turn car on or off, or signal to leave track" (And, of course, to hold a checkered flag.)
 - b. Tip car over on side – ask driver to hold up the car – show them that they **cannot** hold up car, **SO DON'T LET GO OF YOUR BUDDY**, your hand could be smashed.
 - c. Point out gas and brake pedals – demonstrate.
 - d. Point out switch and its function – Ask driver to look you in the eyes and remove hand from steering wheel to turn switch on. Hands back on the wheel. Drill your driver several times until driver can confidently switch on & off. Example:
Switch on (no peeking) – hands back on wheel. Switch off (no peeking) – hands back on wheel. Switch on (no peeking) – hands back on wheel.
Switch off (no peeking) – hands back on wheel. (No fair if you peek.)
 - e. Ask driver if they are ready to drive! And ask if they have any questions?
 - f. Retest them on flags and hand signals.
 - g. Disengage drive axle spline if possible or take the chain off and tell driver you are going to push them around the track without engine running, to see if they remember where to drive.
 - h. Push around track. Ask if they have any questions. See if they are ready to try with engine running. Explain: When handler starts pushing and taps you on the head, turn switch on, Drive!! PUSH THEM OFF.
5. Drive pattern through and around pylons. As driver's speed and pattern improves, begin removing pylons, remove gate pylons in pairs first, leaving straightaway and corner pylons for last. Once all pylons are removed and driver shows he/she can run pattern, stop them, and praise them for what they have accomplished. "You are doing great; see, you are so good you don't need the cones anymore."
6. Take a break – many kids will be pooped by this point and need time to think about what they have accomplished. This is a good stopping point: For lessons during the week after school – this may be the end of the first lesson. For lessons on weekend – (with more than one student) you could switch to next driver and go through the drills with them.
7. **Possibly Second Session: Experienced driver required.**
 - a. Suit up and review switch drill, flags, and hand signals.
 - b. Have student drive along to see if he/she remembers what was learned in the first session. If positive, then proceed to passing game. If negative, place corner and straightaway pylons to help reinforce last session. Usually, the pattern will come back

- c. to the driver quickly.
- d. Test reactions to sudden hazards on in order to see if driver is ready to have another car on the track with them. Remember to remind driver that the cones are made of soft rubber; do not let them know you will be throwing one out in front of them.
- e. The Passing Game: At this point an experienced driver is necessary. Have both cars stop in the turn, single file, and describe how you want the rear car to pass the front car, on the inside coming out of the turn. (The handlers can demonstrate by pretending they are cars and passing each other). Emphasize that they cannot pass on the outside, and how that would cause an accident if tried.
- f. Start the passing game by instructing the experienced driver to be the first to pass, and to slow down once they have passed the student. The student will likely be slow and tentative, and this will make it easier for the two cars to drive single file. Once the experienced driver has passed the student, have them slow down so the student may pass. Continue this exercise until the student is passing with confidence. In many cases this will be a good time to stop – Ask if they would like a break. Having achieved confidence with another car on the track, many students will realize they want to continue training. Some students, especially the very young, may not want to continue. Emphasize that they are the “boss” in the car, and they don’t have to drive if they don’t want to.

8. Third Session: Experienced driver required.

- a. Review all that has been learned so far to reinforce the ideas of pattern, passing, flags, and hand signals (on track also). Stop the cars at start/finish line.
- b. Describe the form-up flags, green and yellow vertically, side by side, for a double file start, the two flags together in one hand vertically for single file restart. Describe “forming-up” by placing the student on the pole and indicating where on the track you want them to drive, low in turns and straights, leaving room on the outside for the #2 car. Emphasize that the pole car controls the pace and needs to watch where they are going, not the other car! Tell them to be steady on the speed, don’t speed up and slow down.
- c. Describe the form-up flags again to reinforce.
- d. Describe the switch position signals and what to do, i.e., pole car moves forward, outside car falls in behind to switch positions, outside car becomes pole car.
- e. Qualify the student and have them exit the track. If they make a mistake, give them another chance to qualify, reinforce what they have learned. If successful tell them that the training is complete. They may need to come back one more time for full review and graduation. Or if you feel they are ready to race –

9. Fourth Session

- a. Review and practice all previous sessions: Form-up, switching positions, exiting procedures, qualifying, etc.
- b. Have a 10-15-lap race with other experienced drivers. (Always let your student be the one to carry the checkered flag at the finish of the race.)
- c. Graduation and presentation of certificate.

Novice Program Committee

- a. Each Club of POWRI shall have a Novice Committee staffed by the Race Director, Club President, Technical Director, Safety Director, and Novice Instructor. If one of the committee members is absent, an alternate should be picked at a given race day. The committee will monitor the progress of each driver in the Novice class. If it is the opinion of the committee a driver is capable of graduating into the 120 Honda/Animal , Jr 160 class, the committee shall notify the Handler verbally, sign the Novice Card and duly note it in the logbook. During the three-race probationary period, a Novice may be returned to the Novice class for obvious reasons. The Novice Committee shall render all possible aid to the Novice handler:
- b. Advising on purchase of cars, engines, and other equipment to help avoid Pitfalls.
- c. Checking legality of engines purchased during the Novice training, in the event that a Novice handler has purchased an illegal engine and this fact is discovered by the Novice Committee, the owner shall be advised that he has one race day.

Novice Racing

- a. The Novice Class shall be a recognized class by POWRI and shall run under the Honda

120 engine rules at all POWRi races. The Novice Class shall be divided into the red and blue divisions only, which may be combined if necessary to make a class.

- b. Illegal Honda engine parts shall be confiscated but the suspension shall not be levied against handlers or drivers for the first offense only. 2nd Offense follows the engine suspension, 30 days suspended from Novice. Novice Class participants shall be required to install a restrictor plate on their carburetor. Any alteration to Novice restrictor plates or slides— 1st Offense automatic 30-day suspension. 2nd offense shall be 1-year suspension.
- c. No more than eight cars may be entered in any Novice race.
- d. One safety man will be present at each corner for every Novice race, outside of wall
- e. If a Novice driver makes an infraction of a racing rule and a call is made, the driver shall be put to the back of the restart lineup, not given a black flag. An explanation shall be given to the driver by the Track Director of what they did wrong and why it should not be done. Novice drivers will not be eliminated from races for receiving multiple driving infractions (Calls).
- f. Infractions such as liberating fluids, dropping safety parts, etc., are not driving infractions and drivers should not be given a second chance before disqualification. These infractions will result in immediate disqualification.
- g. On the first day of Novice competition, the driver shall be entered in all races at the back of the lineup of the race for which he has qualified regardless of qualifying position.

Graduation of Novice Drivers

- a. The Novice Class is a learning class, so as soon as the Novice driver is proficient at line ups, racing in traffic, and the other needed skills to race in a competitive class, they MUST be moved to the Honda 120/Animal or Jr 160 classes.
- b. A Novice driver must participate in at least three events before graduating to a competitive (Honda 120/Animal/Jr 160) class. **Once the driver has completed his three (3) Red or Blue Novice Race, they must move up to the next class. Novice committee has the discretion to hold driver back for up to three more races if needed.**
- c. Clubs should hold a small ceremony to make the advancement of a Novice driver into the Honda 120/Animal or Jr 160 classes.
- d. On the first day of competition in the Honda 120/Animal or Jr 160 class, the new driver shall be entered in all races at the back of the pack for which they qualified, regardless of qualifying position.
- e. All graduating Novice drivers shall be on probation for three events and shall not be allowed to compete in any class above Honda 120/Animal or Jr 160 Class until he has participated in three Honda 120/Animal /Jr 160 events to acquire the necessary experience involved in handling a car in other classes.
- f. Once a Novice is graduated to Honda 120/Animal/Jr160 and completes his/her probationary period, they may not be returned to the Novice class except if there is a lapse in the participation of a driver, they may be moved back to Novice for a trial period if Novice Committee feels it necessary.
- g. In order to run Unrestricted Animal, Mod, B, WF or Half a driver must run one 12 month period upon graduation from the novice class, in a lower class or combination of the lower classes or obtain the approval of the Novice Committee before competing in these classes. In addition, you must be the appropriate age to run these classes before competing. (The POWRi Move Up form must be completed and signed by parents of child, Club President, and Club Novice Director and sent to POWRi).

All novices must have their novice training and novice races completed and moved to competitive class within three months of starting their training.