



# GUIDE TO RALLY



**RESOURCES AND INSIGHTS TO RALLY ON ANY BUDGET**

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THIS GUIDE WILL TAKE YOU THROUGH THE PRIMARY 3 STAGES OF INVESTMENT.

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This interactive guide offers video and website links to help you take your first steps into the world of stage rally.

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# WHAT IS STAGE RALLY?



Stage rally has many characteristics that make it unique to most other motorsports. We put together our overview of what is stage rally. If you already have the rally bug, share with your friends. Every driver needs a co-driver!

WATCH THE VIDEO



## COURSE

What most people have seen are the high-speed sections of rallies: cars flying through the air, flipping over, or sliding into trees. Those are the **Special Stages**, where teams race from A to B as fast as possible. These are public roads, usually gravel forest or logging roads, that are closed to traffic so you can run flat out. Stages typically range from **4 to 20 miles**, with national events totaling over **100 stage miles**.

Even when you aren't racing full speed, once an event starts, you're always on the clock. Between stages, you drive on public roads at posted speed limits, following precise instructions for **time, speed, and distance**. Not following those directions results in time penalties. Rally is a **timed competition**, not door to door racing. One car starts every minute, and the **lowest total time wins**.

## CARS

Almost any everyday car can become a rally car. Vehicles must be **street legal**, with headlights, turn signals, and license plates, but also built to the **highest safety standards**. Roll cages, fire suppression systems, and HANS devices are designed to give the crew the best chance of walking away from even the wildest crashes.

Each rally features multiple **classes** of cars: two-wheel drive, all-wheel drive, turbo, non-turbo, and both national and regional competitors. A single event can have up to ten classes, each with its own podium alongside the overall winner. Depending on your budget and skill,

there are many ways to race and be competitive in North American rally.

Our version of a pit area is called service, where cars are worked on. Once or twice per day, teams return for a fixed **20 to 40 minute** window to repair damage, change tires, refuel, and head back out to compete.

## CHARACTER

What makes rally especially unique compared to most other motorsports is its people and structure. Events are hosted and run almost entirely by **unpaid volunteers**, usually 200 to 300 per national event, who manage checkpoints, control spectators, run radio networks, close roads, recover cars, and handle logistics and permits.

Unlike most forms of racing, every rally car has **two people inside**, the **driver** and **co-driver**. Working together, they create a custom dictionary of terms called **pace notes**, describing every upcoming corner, crest, and surface change. During the race, the co-driver reads these notes aloud so the driver can race based on what they hear, not what they see.

The day or two before competition, teams complete **reconnaissance (recce)**, driving the stages, not in their race car, at legal speeds to build and refine their notes.

Rally enjoys a huge following and fanbase in Europe and continues to grow in North America. With each season, more drivers, co-drivers, and fans are discovering this sport's unique mix of teamwork, challenge, and adventure.



If you have spare time but don't have much or any money to put towards rally yet, there are still several ways you can get started. Rally is a very complicated sport that is extremely difficult to learn quickly. Any Experience will prove valuable down the road.

## JOIN ONLINE COMMUNITIES

### Facebook Groups

[North American Rally \(FS/FT/WTB\)](#)

A buying and selling marketplace for rally equipment and cars.

[North American Rally](#)

General community with over 20,000 members that is used to discuss the sport and a wide range of topics. It is also a common place for Co-Drivers and Drivers to get paired up within the community.

[New England Rally](#)

A New England specific group, mainly made up of grassroots efforts. Check your area for a more local rally group on Facebook and don't be afraid to reach out in the North American Rally group to connect with people in your area!

### Reddit

[r/rally/](#)

A Worldwide community of rally enthusiasts.

## FINDING MOTIVATION FROM OTHERS

Our CEO spent 22 years learning how to run businesses so he could become a rally champion someday. He started a podcast to interview others who have found some kind of path to success in life that has given them time and money to pursue their passions.

Find your motivation from their stories on [Spotify](#) or on [YouTube](#).



## FOLLOW THE RESULTS

Stage rally is done in rural areas over long distances with limited access to modern conveniences. Currently cars at national rallies have a tracking system so you can watch results and follow a bit of action live here:



## SPECTATING A RALLY

Seeing a rally in person can require significant understanding of a local area and knowing how the rally is run.

Most events will put out a spectator guide:



OR



You will be going to rural areas without cell phone service. We recommend your first experience in rally is to volunteer.

More about that on the next page →



## VOLUNTEER AT YOUR LOCAL EVENTS

All stage rallies in North America are run by volunteers. The best way for you to learn how a rally works is to volunteer at a rally local to you. Since each event is independently run, the process of signing up to volunteer is different for each event.

You can find more information here:

[American Rally Association](#), [NASA Rallysport](#) or [Canadian Rally Championship](#).

The NASA Rallysport link is a great resource to learn more about some of the jobs available to volunteers.



Some volunteer jobs may require specific qualifications, licensing, or equipment to perform those roles at a rally. A couple examples include: any member of the comms team is required to have [ham radio licensing](#), [sweep team](#) members are required to have a personal vehicle and the specialty equipment capable of recovering crashed rally cars in all kinds of terrain.

Rallies can be few and far between. It's common that the closest rally is up to 800 miles away from you. If you don't like road trips, this sport probably isn't for you.

## BECOME RALLY MEDIA

If you enjoy taking pictures or video and you want to get out on some rally stages, becoming rally media can also give you great insight into what happens at a rally because you will get to witness every single aspect of the rally. From day one park exposé, to the podium, to watching the cars race by on stage. Getting to capture and share the experience is satisfying while you are helping to preserve the memory for yourself and others. Once you gain more experience with capturing the drivers on stage you will begin to understand why different driving techniques are used in different road sections, how different classes of cars handle those road sections, and you get to be a part of a growing community.



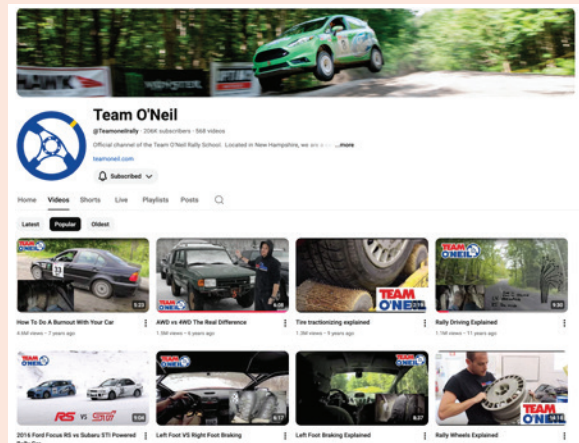
WATCH →

[The Most EXCITING Job You Could Imagine: Capturing Rally](#)

## SUBSCRIBE TO THE TEAM O'NEIL YOUTUBE CHANNEL

For over 10 years, we have been giving some of our secrets away on our [Team O'Neil YouTube Channel](#).

Learn how to [Left Foot Brake](#), [do a burn out](#), find the answer to "[Will It Rally?](#)" and a large library of driving techniques broken down into steps for you.





# WORK ON CARS

Any person who wants to drive a rally car can only be helped by having mechanical knowledge and sympathy. Spending time working on cars or watching detailed mechanical videos will help your understanding of how cars work. This is relatively low cost assuming you already have a car. If not, getting a car and tools can be a significant investment. Becoming a mechanic can be a hobby but also a career for some. A good portion of the rally community have some kind of background in mechanics.

Having the ability to work on cars can also get you an opportunity to be on a rally crew. Most teams will take on another crew member who is willing to volunteer their time. Who knows, it could even turn into a small paid role in the future. Stage rally is a small group of highly



enthusiastic people. Becoming active on the online community or volunteering at an event will help you get to know the teams very quickly.

Even if you don't have mechanical experience, you can help the driver/co-driver get food and







“  
**MY CAREER IS PLAYING RACE CARS FOR A LIVING. HOW AWESOME IS THAT?**  
~ Ryan Thompson  
”

be around as another pair of hands. The rally cars come into service and only have 30-45 minutes to make repairs and get back out on stage. Covering your costs while getting to be involved in your hobby can be pretty cool and is a great opportunity to learn more about the sport.

Get a hands-on look at the skills and techniques used by professional rally mechanics and crews. These

videos cover everything from car prep and service-park strategy to on-the-fly repairs and vehicle recovery.

## WATCH THESE TOO!

-  [How a manual transmission works](#)
-  [How a differential works](#)
-  [WRC Mechanic](#)
-  [Rally Car Build Explained](#)
-  [Learning how cars work playlist](#)
-  [Rally Suspension 101](#)



# Stage 2

Ready to take the next step? These options require some investment but offer hands-on experience and faster skill development on your path into rally.

## VOLUNTEERING TO CO-DRIVE

Learning a dictionary of terms used to describe the roads of a rally can take a significant amount of time. As a co-driver you can learn what the driver needs to hear to see and understand the road ahead. It would be your job to deliver notes at the driver's pace and to guide the driver to all required waypoints (we call them controls). Getting in the right seat is a significant undertaking and should be done with the understanding of all risks involved.

Here is a detailed look at the [Driver/Co-Driver role](#)



There are Co-Driver schools available if you want to pay to learn the role of co-driver but there is nothing stopping you from just getting out there and doing it. There are many people asking to be paid to co-drive so if you are willing to do it for free or even willing to cover your own costs for the opportunity, you could jumpstart your experience.



*PAGE NOTE*   
*DICTIONARY*



## ATTEND A CO-DRIVER SCHOOL



Other co-driving schools exist like Oz Rally Pro or Craig Drew Online course



# GO TO RALLY SCHOOL

CHAMPIONS AND ACTION  
SPORTS STARS START HERE



For 29 years the only school to be founded by and produce rally champions. Most of our customers aren't trying to go rally but are more curious about what this sport is about. Our course is a mix of fun and education, you will leave our facility with the most real world experience in the shortest amount of time. Here is what our customers have said:

## READ THE REVIEWS (577)

“

If you are planning on getting into Rally or just be a more competent driver, seriously consider Team O'Neil.

”

~ Will Parker



# Stage 3



With more resources, you can move straight into competition-focused programs and start building real rally experience.

## START COMPETING

### RALLYCROSS OR HILLCLIMB EVENTS

#### No Roll-Cage, No Co-Driver, No Problem!

Before you need a roll cage many cars can compete in Rallycross or hillclimb events. These are lower cost ways for you to get some seat time and start to understand the limits of your equipment

### RALLYSPRINT (known in New England as Gravel Trials)

#### Roll-Cage and Co-Driver Required

You need to invest and have a full stage rally car but everything is boiled down into a one day event. Easier way to test a new built car or start to build a relationship with a co-driver. This is a big step up from Rallycross but not ready for two days of recce along with two days of racing for a full stage rally event

[SCCNH Gravel Trials](#) / [ARA Rally Ready Rally Sprint](#) / [NW Rally Association Rally Sprint](#) / [CRC Competition](#)

## GO RALLYING

There is nothing stopping anyone from getting their rookie rally license and going rallying. We cannot advise this as the smartest starting point but there is nothing stopping you from starting here.

Our first question we always ask is: **What is your goal?**

Going to finish a rally and going to win a rally requires a significant difference in decision making. There are multiple classes of cars with varying levels of competition.



Your budget and time would be our next question as that can also answer the first question most of the time.

[ARA competitor links](#)

or

[NASA Rallysport license](#)

There are companies like [Thompson Racing Fabrication](#) who can rent, build, or support your rally car, which is a great shortcut for getting started without having to learn the detailed mechanics to be successful in rallying.

If you want to tackle building your own rally car, we have a [video series about Roll Cage design](#) that is vital for you watch before taking on your own build:

It is possible to do it yourself, you will need: A truck capable of towing, trailer, tools, spare parts, and at least one crew member.



# FULL SERVICE OPTION



We supply a stage rally car, crew, co-driver, safety gear. This is an arrive and drive package with the training included to ensure your success in the toughest motorsport in the world.

This custom package is built for each customer since every person has a different starting point. This product has taken drivers who have never driven a manual transmission to winning a rally championship in two years.

Learn to Drive by taking the [Team O'Neil 5 Day Rally School](#). This course was designed to be the starting point for all future rally drivers.

We will pair you up with a co-driver or train up your friend and get you working together through our [Co-Driver School](#). Develop your dictionary and limit your chances of time penalties throughout your first event.

**Advanced Drivers Training.** Before you race your car for the first time get seat time and coaching in the exact car used for competition

**Compete at a Gravel Trial at Team O'Neil.** A full one day of racing that will prepare you for the final step of going to a full national rally. Hone in your driving skill as you develop your co-driver relationship. Find out what you like and don't like before going on the national stage

**Full Stage Rally Event.** Finishing your first rally is such an accomplishment and we can't wait to help you get there!

**To start your journey call Karl at 603-444-4488 or email [info@teamoneil.com](mailto:info@teamoneil.com)**



[WWW.TEAMONEIL.COM](http://WWW.TEAMONEIL.COM)

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