

PCA Driver Education Lead-Follow Minimum Standards

Version 3.3

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This document describes the temporary PCA minimum standards for conducting a Driver Education (DE) event with Lead-Follow driving instruction. Lead-Follow instructed events are a temporary change to the normal PCA in-car instructed events when in-car instruction is not an option. These types of events can only be held with prior approval of the PCA Executive Committee and the PCA DE Committee.

All of the normal PCA DE Minimum Standard requirements still apply and can be found here:

<https://www.pca.org/drivers-education-minimum-standards>

The Lead-Follow driver instruction applies ONLY to run groups which consist entirely of drivers who are not qualified to drive solo at a PCA event. There is no Lead-Follow driver instruction for solo-approved drivers at PCA Events. Note: Instructor demonstrations with a student following or Instructor observations with a student leading are permitted in all solo groups.

1. Objectives

The objectives of the temporary PCA Lead-Follow (L-F) DE instruction is to provide a track opportunity for non-solo students without an instructor in the student's car. The goal is to keep students and instructors safe both in the paddock and on track. The goals of Lead-Follow instruction are:

- Introduce the track to students in a safe manner
- Demonstrate the ideal track line to students

- Demonstrate by vision and voice the vehicle position and the timing of the amount of steering, braking and throttle at all points on the track
- Control a student's pace to ensure they learn DE skills safely -
- The maximum speed of L-F DE vehicles at all points on the track and the distance between the instructor and student vehicles will be enforced by the L-F instructors. The minimum distance shall not be less than 3 car lengths.

2. Instructor Training

All Region instructors who will provide on-track L-F instruction must participate in a Region-sponsored Lead-Follow instructor training course taught by PCA-Approved L-F trainers. Region L-F instructor candidates will be selected by Region CDIs. L-F instructor candidates will be required to view the PCA National and the Ross Bentley MotorSport Safety Foundation Lead-Follow videos before attending their L-F training.

PCA will provide an initial 1-day Lead-Follow "train the trainers" event to develop trainers who will instruct Region L-F instructor candidates. All L-F trainers must attend the national training in person to be able to train L-F instructor candidates. The trainers shall be CDIs or CDI-designates for any region choosing to provide Lead-Follow DE instruction events. National Instructor Trainers will also be utilized.

Region Lead-Follow DE instructor training can be done in conjunction with a normal PCA solo-only DE. The L-F instruction must be provided in a separate run group.

The L-F Instructor training shall include the proper use of Instructor-to-Student communication devices, hand signals, along with pre- and post-session instruction and follow-up.

2.1 Basic Instructing Skills

To successfully pass the L-F instructor training, an instructor must be able to reliably coach students by observing them and their car in the instructor's rearview mirrors, along with proper communication with the

student before, during, and after a track session. A L-F instructor shall meet the following objectives:

- Coaches the Student to be properly positioned on all portions of the track including Turn-In, Apex, and Track-out for each turn.
- Coaches the Student to control the car with appropriate steering, braking and throttle inputs.
- Sets expectations for on-track pace and Instructor car-to-Student car spacing.
- Ensures that the student is maintaining the proper spacing between their car and the instructor's car and appropriate pace for the group.
- Recognizes and takes actions when the student's on-track behavior is unsafe and/or interferes with other on-track Lead-Follow pairs. This will typically mean exiting the track to provide in-paddock coaching.
- Conducts a thorough briefing post-session to cover the strengths and weaknesses of the just completed session. This should include instruction on:
 - Specific problem areas for the student
 - Improvement goals
 - Specific skills that may be worked on in the next session
 - Review of vision, smoothness, and weight transfer concepts
 - Reviewing Student goals
 - Responding to student's questions

3. Region Responsibilities

The regions will be responsible for determining how their normal DE processes will be modified to conduct a Lead-Follow event at their tracks. The regions must communicate early and clearly all the requirements and procedures for L-F events to Participants, Instructors, Event Staff, Facilities personnel, Track workers and Emergency personnel.

3.1 L-F Instructors

Regions are responsible for providing L-F instructor training utilizing PCA-approved L-F trainers.

All L-F instructors will have ONE student assigned per Instructor-Student pair (pod) within the L-F designated run group. A single instructor leading multiple students in a pod is NOT permitted at this time.

The L-F DE instruction technique assumes an instructor is fully experienced with the track where the instruction takes place.

It is not recommended that an L-F trained instructor provide instruction at a track unfamiliar to them.

Each region will decide on the maximum acceptable speeds at all points on track for the Lead-Follow run groups. These decisions must consider the requirement to maintain clearly audible communications at all times. These acceptable speeds must be clearly communicated to the L-F instructors. L-F instructors are required to not exceed the designated speeds.

3.2 Lead-Follow Groups

Lead-Follow DE Instruction must be provided in separate group from all other run groups. In the L-F group, only Instructor-Student pods are permitted, except that the CDI may designate Instructor-only cars for the purpose of observation. Instructor-Student pods are not permitted in any other run group.

The recommended maximum number of Instructor-Student pods is 4-5 pods per mile of track. As an example, a 3-mile track may have no more than 15 Instructor-Student pods.

Events may designate multiple Lead-Follow run groups. Passing in L-F groups can only be done in pre-defined Let-By zones, and only with a point by BOTH the instructor and student. Given the extra space required by the lead pod and the passing pod, the point by must be given as early as possible to allow the passing pod to complete the pass with the let-by zone.

3.3 Lead-Follow Students

All first-time non-solo L-F students must have a training session before their first on-track session to cover the basics of proper HPDE driving, including but not limited to:

- Preparing the car for the track - lug nuts, tire pressures, removing loose items, etc.
- Proper seating and hand position.
- Fundamentals of car control and weight transfer.
- Proper throttle, brake and steering application (smoothness)
- Location of staffed corner stations.
- Procedures for mechanical problems while on track.
- Procedures for communications failure while on track.
- Let-By procedures.-

These items should be reviewed at the start of each day (for multi-day events) and in all classroom sessions and debrief sessions. Most of these points are covered in the Novice Classroom for DE PowerPoint document located on the website: Forms & Documents, Region Management, DE Training, Novice Classroom for DE

4. Car to Car Communication

All Lead-Follow pods must have a minimum one-way voice communication from the instructor to the student, provided that:

- The communication can be clearly heard by student
- The in-car device, in both the Instructor and Student vehicles, is securely mounted
- No on-track adjustments are required other than volume control
- The select devices are tested on-track prior to the DE event and are proven stable for the entire circuit and planned session length
- Any required device configuration can be easily accomplished in the paddock prior to the on-track session
- If any devices are provided to the student, these devices must be disinfected per COVID-19 protocols

Two-way voice communication may be used if the Student-to-Instructor communications operates in a completely hands-free mode.

Communication devices that may be suitable are:

- FM Transmitter (Example: Reteless FT11 or Reteless TR508) - this device is strongly recommended over the others.
- FRS, VHF, or UHF
- Blue-Tooth Paired Devices

Cell phones are prohibited due to the possibility of a dropped call, which would require the instructor and student to enter the hot pit to redial the call (redialing and answering on track is NOT permitted).

Regions should have at least one alternate option in case a student or an instructor does not have the required communication device.

5. Instructor Procedures

All Lead-Follow events will only have pods consisting of one student and one instructor all in a separate run group. The instructor will be responsible for the following with each student:

- All regular activities, as with any novice student, as determined by the Region
- Summarize the Lead-Follow procedures
- Review the emergency signals with the student.
- Instruct the student to maintain 3 car lengths minimum distance with the instructor's car unless advised differently by the instructor.
- Setup and test the communication device. Ensure the student knows that all communication is from the instructor to the student over the communication device, even if the device used by the instructor or region is capable of two-way communication.
- The instructor must ensure the safety of all cars around the pair. If the student is lagging too far behind or getting too close to other cars, the instructor must remedy this situation immediately.
- After the session, the instructor should conduct a post-session debrief.
- Instructor must maintain clearly audible communications with the student at all time while on track.

6. Emergency Procedures

If the student has an urgent issue while on track, the student should indicate a need to pit by repeatedly flashing their high beams. Upon

observing this, the instructor and student will put their raised fists out the window using the standard PCA hand signal, and the instructor will lead the student into the hot pit.

If the student cannot make it to pit lane, the instructor will continue to the hot pit and wait for the student or the end of the session. The student should be briefed ahead of time at the drivers meeting and with the initial instructor briefing of how to pull offline safely, if possible.

Once the instructor and student are in the paddock as the result of a voluntary or black flag pit-in for an emergency situation as described above, the instructor is responsible for getting out of his/her car to discuss the situation, ensure all communication equipment is working properly, and returning to the track as determined by the instructor.

7. Driving Pace

As mentioned in the Instructor Training section, a key aspect of the safety of any Lead-Follow event will be the on-track pace. Pace will be discussed and reviewed in the daily instructors' meeting and in the students' driver meeting.

8. PCA Event Insurance

Insurance coverage under standard PCA DE Event insurance will not differ for Lead-Follow run group(s). Instructors will only be allowed to use their own vehicles in the Lead-Follow sessions. As is standard, PCA DE Event insurance does not provide coverage for vehicle damage or damage to track property. It is the instructor's responsibility to secure on-track insurance for his/her vehicle if concerned about possible on-track damage.

9. Standard PCA Hand Signal and Light Signals for Lead Follow Instruction

All communication with a student by an instructor MUST be done with a car-to-car communication device of the region's choice. All communication is, at a minimum, one-way, from the instructor to the student. Once on track, if the student is not able to hear the instructor clearly and reliably, the student should repeatedly flash their high beams. The instructor should then signal a pit entry to resolve the issue.

The instructor may ask questions via the communication device, and the student can respond in the affirmative by flashing their high beams.

If the student believes their car has a mechanical problem, the student may also indicate the need to pit by flashing their high beams. The instructor should confirm the need to pit via the radio, and then lead the student into the hot pits, using the raised fist pit-in hand signal.

A fist raised out the window has the same meaning as any other PCA session. This indicates the drivers' intention to enter pit lane when the cars arrive at pit line.