



Making a Fast Transition

Over the years as clothing and equipment has improved, I see less and less people changing shorts and tops during races - even in an Ironman distance race. Therefore, I am going to give tips on transition for a sprint triathlon the same as I would for an Ironman. You will have to make your own call about clothing changes.

General Tips:

- Elastic laces or lace lock are great. Your fingers are often cold, which makes tying your laces difficult.
- Keep transitions simple. You will be in a rush, and often the excitement of the fans and changing to a new discipline can cause you to forget things like your number, salt tablets, gels, etc. You might even leave your helmet on for the run. (Yes, I have seen that!)
- Upon nearing the end of the swim or bike, start thinking about what you need to do in transition. This is also a good time to relax a bit.
- Be considerate of others and do not scatter your stuff outside of your transition area.

Beginners:

Swim to Bike –

- Be sure you know where your bike is located. Before the start of the race, walk to the swim start and practice finding your bike. You will be surprised how hard it can be to locate your bike even at a small local race.
- After the swim, while walking/running to your bike, unzip your wetsuit. Pull your suit off of your top and down around your hips. Once you find your bike pull the rest of your wetsuit off. Be sure that you use body glide or a similar product to make getting out of your wetsuit easier (if wearing one).
- Calmly put on your socks (if you use them) and the shoes you will use for biking.
- Put on your helmet before un-racking your bike.
- Walk your bike to the exit of the transition area. Then, mount your bike and enjoy the bike ride!

Bike to Run –

- Before the race, start understanding the directional pattern of the transition area, and find your bike rack from the bike transition entrance.



- Get off of your bike before entering the transition area. Walk your bike to your rack station.
- Rack your bike, then take off your helmet.
- Change into your running shoes if you did not bike in them. Make sure your either have your number for the run or grab it!
- Walk/run out of transition and have a great run!

Advanced:

Swim to Bike –

- Be sure you know where your bike is located. Before the start of the race, walk to the swim start and practice finding your bike. You will be surprised how hard it can be to locate your bike even at a small local race.
- After the swim, while walking/running to your bike, unzip your wetsuit. Pull your suit off of your top and down around your hips. Once you find your bike pull the rest of your wetsuit off. Be sure that you use body glide or a similar product to make getting out of your wetsuit easier (if wearing one).
- Calmly put on your socks (if you use them) and then your biking shoes.
- Put on your helmet before un-racking your bike.
- Walk your bike to the exit of the transition area.
- Mount your bike and go for it!

Bike to Run –

- Before the race start, understand the directional pattern of the transition area, and find your bike rack from the bike transition entrance.
- Get off of your bike before entering the transition area.
- Run your bike to your rack station.
- Rack your bike and take off your helmet.
- Change into your running shoes. Make sure your either have your number for the run or grab it!
- Run out of transition and have a great run leg.

Expert:

Swim to Bike –



- Be sure you know where your bike is located. Before the start of the race, walk to the swim start and practice finding your bike. You will be surprised how hard it can be to locate your bike even at a small local race.
- After the swim, while walking/running to your bike, unzip your wetsuit. Pull your suit off of your top and down around your hips. Once you find your bike pull the rest of your wetsuit off. Be sure that you use body glide or a similar product to make getting out of your wetsuit easier (if wearing one).
- Run your bike to the exit of the transition area. You will have your biking shoes already clipped into the pedals.
- Hop on your bike with both feet on top of your shoes. Pedal up to speed and slide one foot into your shoe. By this time, you will have slowed a bit, so pedal back up to speed. Once up to speed, slide the other foot into the shoe. Sometime during all of this, you will tighten the straps on your shoes. This whole process can be a little tricky, so be sure to practice a few times before the race. I even see some people using rubber bands to hold their shoes upright. I am sure it works, but I seem to do find without the extra trouble. I know all of this seems like a big pain, but the big advantage to leaving your shoes on your bike is that you are moving along the course all the while getting into your shoes.

Bike to Run –

- Before the race start, understand the directional pattern of the transition area, and find your bike rack from the bike transition entrance.
- Slip your feet out of your shoes within the last few hundred meters before the transition area. Continue to pedal with your feet on top of your shoes. Be extremely careful while doing this because if you lose a shoe, you will end up losing a ton of time having to stop to go back and retrieve it!
- Get off of your bike before entering the transition area.
- Run your bike to your rack station, rack your bike and then take off your helmet.
- Change into your running shoes. Make sure you either have your number for the run or grab it.
- Run out of transition and give it hell!