

TIME TO TRI IS A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT BY IRONMAN AND USA TRIATHLON



Contents

Time to Tri	
How can you be involved?	2
What is a Time to Tri info session	2
What an info session is:	2
What an info session is not:	3
Planning your info sessions	3
Date	3
Time	3
Location	3
Supplies/Equipment/Space	4
Must haves:	4
Nice to haves:	4
Marketing	4
Social media	5
Cross Promoting	7
Format + Content of the info session	7
Covering Getting Started in Triathlon	8
Covering the TTT Worksheet	11
Beyond the info session	15
Immediate Actions	15
Provide Feedback	16
Resources	17
Info Session Checklist & Timeline	18
Planning & Marketing (3-6 weeks before event)	18
Day of Info Session – Pre-session	18
Day of Info Session – During Session	18
After Info Session	18



Time to Tri

Time to Tri is an unprecedented initiative within the triathlon industry to grow the sport by proactively recruiting and supporting athletes as they train for and compete in their first race. The initiative, a strategic joint effort between USA Triathlon and IRONMAN, was unveiled in early 2018. The overarching goal is to increase triathlon participants by 100,000 nationwide by the end of 2020.

More participants in our sport leads to a host of enhancements for everyone including stronger communities, more opportunities to train and participate, and more industry partners and innovations. We are thrilled to have you involved with this initiative and hope that you share your learnings both with us and with your local triathlon community.

How can you be involved?

The Time to Tri initiative has recruited multiple partners including clubs, coaches, and race directors to work together to collectively grow our sport. This growth will directly benefit all our partners, as it will help to grow tri club membership, create more athletes in the sport for coaches to develop, and create a larger athlete base for local short-course triathlon events. More triathletes mean a better, stronger, more fun, triathlon community for all of us!

As a Time to Tri partner, you are asked to commit to a minimum of four Time to Tri info sessions per year (average of one per quarter), where you will help to recruit new athletes to the sport and help them navigate getting started. Of course, more info sessions are always welcome! Additionally, we ask that you spread the word about Time to Tri via your social media channels, within your local communities by sharing the word at tri/run/bike shops, within the greater fitness community in your area, or other opportunities you come across that seem like a great way to get in front of potential new triathletes.

Outside of the initial recruitment, there are multiple opportunities to remain involved with new triathletes. In a later section of this guide book, we discuss opportunities *Beyond the Info Session* to help new triathletes to navigate through their first season in the sport.

What is a Time to Tri info session

An info session is an opportunity for you to share information about the sport of triathlon with members of your community. Events can be hosted at a local tri/bike/run shop, a restaurant, coffee shop, or other community space where it is easy to gather a group of people. The most important elements of the info session are being able to welcome new triathletes into the sport and give them the initial information they need to get started. There is a lot to learn along the way, the info session is just focused on the basics. Think back to when you first got started – you likely didn't know everything on day one.

What an info session is:

- An opportunity to break down the barriers to entry to triathlon (i.e. not comfortable with the swim, don't have a bike, not enough time to train, etc.)



- An opportunity to talk about the benefits and fun of triathlon
- An opportunity to meet other members of the triathlon community and be social
- An opportunity to learn about upcoming local races and pick one to commit to
- A chance for prospective triathletes to learn about the basics of the sport
- A chance to recruit new triathletes
- Very basic overview of what to expect when training
- **Very basic** talk about equipment

What an info session is not:

- Not a time to create experts on the sport
- Not a time to explain all the rules and details of race day
- Not a nutrition lesson (if covered at all, only the very BASICS)
- Not a talk about long course racing, course records, getting faster, etc.
- Not a time to talk about TT/ Tri bikes, race wheels, power meters, high-end components

Planning your info sessions

There are several details to consider when planning your info sessions. Date, time, location, partners, and availability of speakers are all important considerations.

Date

When choosing the date for your events, it is helpful to time them 8-16 weeks before upcoming short course triathlons in your area. It is important to have some goal races to suggest to prospective triathletes so they can commit and start training right away. It is also important that the date of your info sessions are days that your preferred location is available as well as people who you would like to be available to present to the audience.

Time

It is generally best to plan info sessions around people's work schedules so that they are easily able to attend. Often weeknights around 6:30PM work well as many people can leave work and get to the event on time and still make it home before it is too late. Weekends can also work, but keep in mind how the info session will affect the ability to plan other events throughout the day. An info session at 10:00AM on a weekend will often work better than 3:00PM as it allows people to have their entire afternoon to do other activities. Make sure you are taking your local community into consideration and what will work for most people you are trying to attract.

Location

Many different types of locations will work for an info session. Being somewhere accessible, with a large enough, quiet space for you to use, and available at a time of day that is convenient are the most important factors. Tri or bike shops tend to be good choices as it makes it easy to talk about equipment – though it is important to keep the conversation to the basics. Often tri or bike shops are also happy to host, may help with providing some snacks, and help with promotion as ultimately it brings more customers to their stores. Restaurants and coffee shops, or even office buildings with open space can all be viable, and you may be able to get space donated. Having a



TV or projector at the location is a nice to have for the presentation, but not vital to hosting a successful info session.

Supplies/Equipment/Space

A successful info session can be held with very few resources, and there are some must haves and some nice to haves

Must haves:

- **Quiet (or mostly quiet) space for the expected group size** you will be talking, and you want your audience to be able to hear you
- Chairs or a place to sit Sessions generally take ~60 min, you want people to be comfortable
- <u>Time to Tri worksheets</u> you'll want your attendees to have info to walk away with to know where to get started
- Sign in Direct your attendees to <u>www.mytimetotri.com/signin</u> either using their own smart phone or a computer or tablet you have provided. They will need to enter their email address as well as your unique Time to Tri info session code (provided in the letter accompanying your packet as well as in the initial email). The sign ins will help us to track how successful the program is as well as provide you with special incentives for your part in growing the sport. Look for specifics in the letter provided with your kit and the initial email.

Nice to haves:

- **Drinks and snacks** because everyone loves snacks! This is especially helpful if your info session is held in the evening, after work, as people are likely to be more engaged if you can keep them from thinking about having dinner after your event.
- A projector or TV screen we have a great <u>Time to Tri video</u> and <u>slides</u> to go along with your presentation. You can still present without the slides, but visuals always help.
- **Clipboards** Its helpful to provide clipboards or a solid surface for people to write on as they are filling out their Time to Tri worksheet
- **Pens** Helpful for the worksheets
- **Prize Drawing** Because who doesn't like free stuff? Get your partner shops/ sponsors to provide some items, get your local short course race director to donate a couple of entries, or make your own personal prizes like "free one-on-one swim lesson". These items may be small, but will make winners feel like they are a part of something and will want to stay involved. Your sign in sheet can be used for your drawing.

Marketing

Planning out the details of your event is important, but equally important is getting the right audience to show up. You put a ton of effort into setting up a great event, make sure you also put effort into promoting it! Once you have a date, time and location secured, you can start marketing your event. There are multiple ways to promote, and your methods may vary depending on the resources you have available and your local community.



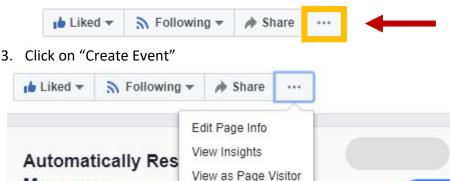
Social media

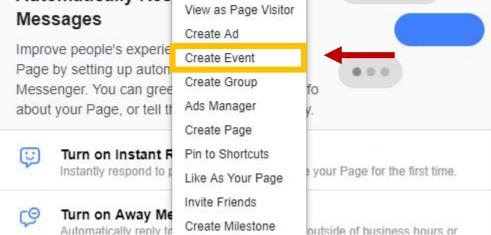
Facebook

This is the best place to create an event. If you have a club/ race/ coaching page, create the event there, then make the venue where you are holding the event a co-host of the event. Then invite members of your local tri community and ask them specifically to share on their own pages.

To create an event on Facebook:

- 1. Navigate to the page you would like to "host" the event (your club, race, or coaching page if you have one, otherwise your personal page).
- 2. Click the 3 dots under your cover photo next to the "share" button





- Fill in all the details of your event and hit "Publish"
- 5. To add a <u>co-host</u> to the event (event venue, other coaches, etc.). Click "Edit" at the top right of the event page, next to Co-hosts (towards the bottom of the page, next to "Options", click where it says "Add Friends" and enter the business' or individual's name, then click "Save"



6. Make sure you share! Invite friends, share on other pages, and send in messenger from the "Share" button on the event page



7. Add an eye-catching photo or video (the Time to Tri Video is good for this) to draw attention to your event, you can do this by clicking on the "Edit" button on the top right of the event page

Instagram

Instagram is a photo-driven platform that can be a great secondary promotional tool to create some buzz around your event. If you are promoting via Instagram, make sure you pick a great photo that represents your group/race and is engaging. This platform especially works well if you, members of your club, or people affiliated with your info session have a strong Instagram following. Creating a unique hashtag for your info session and using <u>#mytimetotri</u> will help your event to get noticed.

In addition to promoting the event, Instagram can be a great way to showcase what happened at your info session to build some buzz for the next one. Utilize this platform to build a following around your club in general through taking pictures at team workouts and social events.

Twitter

Twitter is different from other social media channels in that it is more like a live update rather than a record. People use Twitter for news, announcements, updates — in general, what's happening now. Twitter it is a great tool to post the action while it is going on. You are putting on an important info session, let people who aren't in the room know what they are missing, and share out some of the valuable points on how to get involved in triathlon. Before the event share some of the digital Time To Tri content — put up the video, share some photos, post the Time to Tri logo, and make sure to post your own photos of your athletes participating in triathlon. Of course, also make sure to include all the info session details so they can show up. As the event is in progress, post periodically to share some of the info and fun times with all the people who couldn't make it to the event. Your event hashtag should be used here as well so people can follow as the session progresses. After the event is over, periodically post photos and noteworthy takeaways — make sure to let people know how they can still connect with the sport.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn can be a useful place to promote your event as an addition to other social media outlets. Most LinkedIn users login during the week, so posting Tuesday — Thursday will be your best bet. Make sure to use an eye-catching image and a link to either the Facebook event page or another event invite with all the details (maybe on your club page). If you are going to have any notable speakers (pro athletes, people of note in your community, race directors, coaches, etc.) this is a great place to tag them in your post and ask them to share on their pages. If they are designated as an "Influencer" by LinkedIn, this is especially helpful.



Cross Promoting

Printed materials may seem a bit outdated, but there is still an argument to be made for a solid promotional flyer. If you have the time and resources, it is helpful to print and distribute small quarter-page sized flyers to local hot spots where your prospective audience will see them. We have provided some simple, editable, and printable versions you are welcome to use for your event. You can find these on the MyTimetoTri.com webpage under the "Partner Resources" link at the bottom of the page. Think of bike and running stores, gyms, healthy food stores and restaurants, etc. Ask an employee of the location if you can leave flyers and if there is a place you can display one (or even a larger version of one) somewhere in the store/ restaurant. You can even use this opportunity to see if they are interested in helping to promote the event on their social channels, contributing to a prize drawing, or helping with some snacks and drinks for the info session.

Include enough information about the event to be compelling as well as all the necessary details. Make sure to include: Event Date, Time (start and expected finish), Location (with address), as well as specifics like if there will be snacks, a prize give away, etc.

Also make sure to include a compelling sentence or two about the event and what you will talk about, such as:

"Ready to try a triathlon? Find out how to get started at a free info session at XYZ location" Or

"Get started in triathlon! Get all of your questions answered and meet the community on x/x/xx"

Feel free to get creative with pictures and colors. Think of what would catch your eye when you are at the checkout counter or browsing in a local store.

Format + Content of the info session

There are a variety of formats that may work, and we have developed some best practices with pilots done in various settings.

First 15 min:

- Give attendees an opportunity to arrive, sign in online via the web form at www.mytimetotri.com/signin, grab a snack or a drink, mingle and find a seat
- Either distribute Time to Tri worksheets (with a clipboard and pen if you supply them) as people sign in or have them laid out on each chair

15 - 30 min after start:

- Play <u>TTT Sizzle video</u> if available
- Introduce your speakers
- Go through the TTT Getting Started in Triathlon presentation either using the slides or the laminated sheets:



Covering Getting Started in Triathlon

Briefly go through each slide or section on the laminated sheet to help break down triathlon and dispel some of the misconceptions your attendees may have about the sport. This presentation is designed to address many of the common barriers to entry that new triathletes encounter, so you may expect some questions and further clarifications on these points after the presentation.

1. Getting Started in Triathlon



- a. Start with a brief intro letting the audience know that they will learn a lot along the way. Time to Tri and your local community are there to provide great resources to get them going in the sport.
- 2. Triathlon: A sport for everyone



- a. A great spot to share a brief story about your own start in triathlon and some struggles you may have had in the beginning. Let your audience know that everyone starts as a beginner.
- 3. Do Something New Everyday



a. Starting the process is the most important part. Start by doing something new and getting outside your comfort zone.



4. Why We Love Triathlon



- a. This is a great opportunity to talk about the welcoming and supportive community as well as the personal benefits to be gained by participating in the sport. This is another good opportunity to add in a personal story about friends found through triathlon.
- 5. You Can Do Each Sport



- a. Most people already have at least some very basic abilities in each sport, and if not, they are here because they are willing to give it a tri. The race happens at your own pace, just keep moving forward.
- 6. Get Connected



- a. Connecting with a club is one of the most rewarding and effective ways to become a triathlete. Today is the perfect day to start making those connections.
- b. Utilize the MyTimeToTri.com website to find resources, races, coaches, clubs, and pools near you.
- c. For female athletes, the Women for Tri closed Facebook group is a great resource and community to join



7. Get Committed



- a. Find a goal event! Having a goal makes it real and much easier to stay focused.
- b. Commit to yourself that you will set aside a few hours per week to dedicate to your training. It doesn't take much to be able to successfully complete your first sprint distance race.

8. Get Gear



- a. There is a broad spectrum of gear available for triathlon, but you probably already have what you need to train. A basic swimsuit and goggles, any bike, including a stationary one at the gym or a mountain bike in your garage, and any pair of running shoes will suffice to get you trained. Before the event, you can rent, borrow, or buy some basics to use on race day no need to invest a fortune.
- 9. Get Swimming



a. If you're not currently comfortable swimming, all you need is a little time in the water. Use the MyTimeToTri.com website to help locate a local pool, Master's Swim programs, and/or lessons. Your local tri club may also have swim workouts that you can join.



10. Get Training



- a. Utilize resources in your community such as spin classes, group runs, and your local tri club workouts
- b. Tell all your friends! Sharing your news will help keep you accountable as well as let people know they can cheer you on during your big day.
- 11. Get Your Free Training Plan



a. Make sure to download the free training plan at MyTimeToTri.com to get an idea of an ideal training plan for you based on your current skill level in all three sports.

30 – 50 min after start:

Covering the TTT Worksheet





Local races

MY L	MY LOCAL EVENTS:				
Date:					
		Visit mytimetotri.com to find a list of events in your area.			

- Provide 2-4 local races that are happening between 8 weeks 12 weeks from your info session date (make sure to tell the participants the dates so they can write them down) (you can use the USAT race calendar to find sanction events near you https://www.teamusa.org/usa-triathlon/events/sanctioned)
- Talk about a couple of key details about each race (i.e. flat course, ocean swim, women's only race, etc.)
- o If there is a group of people from your club participating in one or several of the races, let attendees know they can go with a group

Tri Clubs

MY LOCAL TRI CLUBS:	
Visit mytimetotri.com to find a list of clubs.	

- o If you are representing a club, this is obviously a great opportunity to talk about why yours is the best!
- o Talk about the comradery of group training, social opportunities and all the fun
- Talk about the support and resources available through clubs (i.e. coaching, group workouts, gear swaps, etc.)



Swim Training

NY LOCAL SWIM LOCATIONS:				
Visit myti	metotri.con	n to find a	list of pools.	

This is a big concern for a lot of new triathletes, make sure you talk about all the ways they can be supported, and become better at this leg of the sport. Be sure to include:

- o Pools with open lap swimming
- o Group pool workout opportunities
- o Group open water swimming opportunities
- o Local masters programs (https://www.usms.org/clubfinder)
- Local adult swim lessons

Bike Options

MY	BIKE TRAINING OPTIONS:	Get creative, you could use a combo of a spin bike, a borrowed bit and a bike you already own. Think through the options.	ke,

Remember, these people are just starting out, they may not have a bike, or only have a hybrid or mountain bike — all of these are okay! For many people starting out, an investment of hundreds or thousands of dollars isn't practical until they know they love the sport (which we all know they will!). People can gain biking fitness in many ways for their first short distance triathlon, including riding a stationary bike in the gym — they just need something that rolls on race day. Once these beginners get their feet wet in the sport, they can be introduced to the myriad of bike options

- o Bike at the gym
- o Ride what you have
- o Borrow a bike
- o Buy a used bike/ entry level bike



Time to Train:

PLAN YOUR TRIANING SCHEDULE

You know your schedule best - find time to train and stick with it! Get started by filling in days and time you can train in the chart below.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Target Hours
Week 1								5-6 Hours
Week 2								4-5 Hours
Week 3								4-5 Hours

On the back side of the TTT worksheet is a grid with days of the week for 8 weeks. This will help your attendees visualize how they will fit in their training for their first sprint. For example, if I know I can generally fit in 1 hour each day, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and another 1-2 hours each weekend day, I have more than enough time to train for my first race.

50+ min into session:

Open the session up to questions from the audience. If there are several members of your local tri community present, allow others to join the panel to answer questions. Remember, stick to the basics. It is best to answer questions briefly and broadly in a group setting. If people have very specific questions invite them to chat one-on-one after the session.

Make sure to close out the session with a thank you to everyone for coming and finish with a call to action so they know their next steps. You can invite them again to go to www.mytimetotri.com for their free training plan, as well as to follow your social media pages, sign up for your tri club, or their first race – have them do something that will solidify their commitment to becoming a triathlete.

Beyond the info session

There is a myriad of information to be absorbed about triathlon, which could not possibly be disseminated or digested in one info session. You are encouraged to create continuous opportunities to engage with new athletes. Some ideas to help develop these new members of our community:

- Create a new-to-the-sport training group for your club
 - Each week focus on one new piece of information to keep it from being overwhelming
- Host swim, bike, and run clinics and invite the broader community
- Partner with local shops to hold gear clinics to talk about what is necessary and what is a nice-to-have
- Host gear swaps to help new triathletes get what they need
- Create sweat-working events where new athletes can train with experienced triathletes but also get to know the community on a personal level
- Host transition clinics and practice moving from one sport to the next in a race scenario
- Hold bike handling clinics doing skills such as grabbing water bottles and cornering
- Hold nutrition clinics and work with partners to provide samples of some common nutrition products

Immediate Actions

- 1. **Explore**: Check out <u>www.MyTimeToTri.com</u> and familiarize yourself with the resources available. Many of the items referenced in this guide are under the <u>Partner Resources</u> link at the bottom of the page.
- Get Connected: Like and Follow the Time to Tri pages on social media and start sharing and tagging stories and pictures of new athletes in your groups and races utilizing #MyTimeToTri
 - a. https://www.facebook.com/mytimetotri
 - b. https://twitter.com/mytimetotri
 - c. https://www.instagram.com/mytimetotri/
 - d. https://www.facebook.com/groups/WomenForTri (females only)
- 3. **Find your team**: Gather a committee to help organize and market your info sessions, potential committee members (members can have multiple roles):
 - Partnerships creates relationships with local businesses such as swim/bike/run shops, restaurants, or anyone in the community who may be able to contribute space or resources
 - b. Education The person (or people) who will be speaking at the info session, someone who is knowledgeable about the sport and approachable for new athletes. This person (or people) should be equipped to answer questions from first-timers as well as be able to keep the conversation on course.
 - c. Marketing Spreading the word about the info sessions and your first-timer programs. Utilizing social media, web, and printed resources to attract new participants.



- d. Logistics getting all the details in order, making sure there is a venue secured, handouts are printed, arranging for seating and any optional needs such as AV and snacks
- 4. **Get to work**: Start planning your info sessions! Remember one per quarter is the goal, but there are lots of ways to recruit new triathletes all year long.
- 5. **Pay it Forward**: Continue to do all the great work you are doing and share the love within the community. Connect with the people who inspired you to become a triathlete and thank them, volunteer at races, put on clinics for beginners continue to help the community flourish.

Provide Feedback

We all want to continue to improve this program and the resources available. After each of your info sessions please fill out the online form at https://tinyurl.com/fedbackTTT and let us know how your event went, as well as what could improve the whole experience. This information should help us all to get better. Thank you for all that you do to make our sport amazing!



Resources

Websites:

http://www.mytimetotri.com http://www.womenfortri.com http://www.usatriathlon.org

Handouts, presentations, and videos:

<u>Time to Tri Video</u>
<u>Time to Tri Getting Started in Triathlon sheet</u>
<u>Time to Tri Presentation (choose PowerPoint or PDF)</u>
<u>Time to Tri Worksheet</u>

Social Media pages:

https://www.facebook.com/mytimetotri https://www.facebook.com/groups/WomenForTri https://twitter.com/mytimetotri https://www.instagram.com/mytimetotri

Other Useful Links:

https://www.mytimetotri.com/signin

IRONMAN U Free Introduction to Triathlon <u>Course https://u.ironman.com/courses/introduction-triathlon</u>

IRONMAN U Find a Coach https://u.ironman.com/find-a-coach

USA Triathlon Event Calendar https://www.teamusa.org/usa-triathlon/events/sanctioned
USA Triathlon Find a Club https://www.teamusa.org/usa-triathlon/events/sanctioned
USA Triathlon Find a Club https://www.usatriathlon.org/Public/Public/FindAClub
U.S. Masters Swimming Club Finder https://www.usms.org/clubfinder



Info Session Checklist & Timeline

Planning & Marketing (3-6 weeks before event)
☐ Secure Venue
☐ Select Date & Time
\square Create Facebook Invite and share on social media sites
☐ Share with EVERYONE (Tri Clubs, local races, local shops, gyms, etc.)
☐ Create flyer and/or posters (optional)
☐ Recruit speaker and volunteers for check-in
☐ Approach local partners to display posters/ flyers and ask for prizes for drawing (optional)
Day of Info Session – Pre-session
\square A few hours before the event make final social media reminder posts
☐ Arrive at location 30 min − 1hr before depending on setup needed
\square If necessary, put up signage directing attendees to info session location
As attendees start to arrive, have them sign in on their own mobile device or on one provided by you
\square Invite guests to grab a snack and mingle with guests and club members
Day of Info Session – During Session
$\ \square$ Distribute Time to Tri Worksheet and Getting Started in Triathlon laminated cards (if not using digital
presentation) either at check in or place on each chair
☐ Play Time to Tri Video (if AV equipment is available)
☐ Have someone introduce the speaker(s), or introduce yourself
☐ Go through the Getting Started in Triathlon presentation or laminated cards (overcoming barriers +
what you need to get started) ☐ Go through Time to Tri Worksheet
☐ Allow time for questions
Allow time for questions
After Info Session
\Box 1 – 2 days after event, follow up with attendees – invite to a workout or clinic, ask if they have any
additional questions
☐ 1 ½ - 2 weeks after event, follow up one more time with attendees who haven't joined you for a
workout to see if they are still interested or if you can help in any way
☐ Start planning your next session!