

Rules of the Real Way to Dakar 2023 by Intercontinental Rally

GENERAL INFO ABOUT THE RALLY

The Real Way to Dakar is an annual off-road competition and adventure raid for enthusiasts who want to participate in a challenging and well-organized trans-African rally. The 2023 edition of the rally will take place from January 23rd to February 4th with an optional soft start in Paris on January 19th.

There are 7 main classes and 9 categories: Motorcycles (categories M1 to 450cc, M2 451cc to 690cc, M3 691cc up and non-fossil fuel), Quads (categories Q1 to 700cc, Q2 701cc up and non-fossil fuel), UTV/BUGGY (max 1499cc and non-fossil fuel), Cars (categories C1 to 3000cc, C2 3001cc to 4200cc, C3 4201cc up and non-fossil fuel), Women, Veteran (47+) and Classic vehicles (built before 1995) – with the top three finishers in each receiving awards. Special recognition is awarded to the most successful team overall in the team trophy competition.

A) Participants, registration, rally route and disqualifying behavior

1. RWD is open to anyone over the age of 18 regardless of their rally experience or nationality. (Parents participating in the adventure category may bring their own kids over the age of 15 years and under their own supervision and responsibility.)
2. A rally racing license is not required to participate, and vehicles do not need to meet requirements set up by rally federations.
3. Every participant is responsible for his/her own safety and security including the safety features of their vehicles.

Participants must understand the risks and dangers associated with a rally and also understand that they are participating at their own risk. Each participant is responsible for damages they may cause to themselves as well as other vehicles, humans, animals or property.

4. The driver is responsible for the vehicle as well as all passengers in the vehicle and all damage the car or its passengers may do to other people, animals or property.

5. All participants must obey the local traffic laws in all countries and at all times. In particular they must pay attention to and respect the speed limit on paved roads and through settlements.
6. Cancellations:
 - If the Organization is forced to cancel the rally due to force majeure (E.g. war, dangers or threats, earthquakes, pandemics, natural disasters, travel restrictions etc.) before October 31st, participants will get a 100 % refund.
 - If, after October 31st, the rally is prevented from taking place due to force majeure, the rally and all registrations will be moved to different dates where carrying out the rally is possible. No refunds will be made after October 31st.
 - If participants cancel their registration, 50% of the registration fee is refundable until October 31st.
 - Cancellation must be made with cancellation form (available by request).
 - After the beginning of November in the year before the rally, the fee is non-refundable unless the rally is canceled by the organizers.
7. The registration is for a specific category (Race, Adventure) and route (Lite, Full) and cannot be changed at a later date. The vehicle itself can be changed to another vehicle in the same class until the end of November in the year before the rally you registered for.
8. Registration is transferable to another participant free of charge until the end of October in the year before the rally that you registered for.
9. The event is limited to 100 registered vehicles.
10. Registration application and full payment must be submitted by October 31st the year before and no new registrations will be accepted after this date.
11. Upon successful completion of document and technical inspections the day before the actual rally every participant will be issued a rally pass that is required for entry into bivouac sites.
12. The accepted vehicles will receive adhesive race decals with their start number. The dimensions of the decals are as follows:
 - Cars/Trucks: 47 cm high x 52,5 cm wide (both front door sides).
 - Moto, Quad/ATV: 13 cm high x 15 cm wide (both sides and front).

13. A participant may be disqualified from the event or be subjected to time penalties under the following circumstances:
- 13.1. Failure to obey instructions from any member of the organizers crew.
 - 13.2. Offense against the rules.
 - 13.3. Behavior violating the spirit of the rules as judged by the rally director.
 - 13.4. Disregard for fair play as judged by the rally director.
 - 13.5. Dangerous, reckless or disrespectful driving on public road, in the terrain or in the camps - and in all situations where local people, spectators, other participants or organizers are present.
 - 13.6. Harming the natural environment.
 - 13.7. Requesting medical assistance in case of a technical break down is considered as reckless endangerment of other participants and will result in disqualification from the rally.
 - 13.8. For safety reasons - without the explicit consent of the Rally Director during the Real Way to Dakar – it is prohibited for the participants to:
 - share any information of the intended routes and accommodation with unregistered people (except government authorities)
 - share a ride with unregistered people (except government authorities)
 - invite or host unregistered guests in the camps.
- Violation of these terms will result in disqualification from the Rally.
14. As a service team or as a participant, you are not allowed to sell service, food or drinks to other participants in the rally, apart from the participants registered with your team. But you are free to help - without receiving money etc.
15. Disqualified participants will not be allowed to continue in the Rally or to stay in the rally camps.
16. The Rally Director is the only authorized person who can explain and may revise the race rules as the rally is underway - if deemed necessary. The Director is the final judge in all disputes that may arise in the interpretation of the rules and any decisions made following the rules.
17. The organizers reserve the right to refuse any application to participate in the rally without any obligation to give any formal reason. Any payments to the organizers made prior to the rejection will be refunded.

18. The Rally Director reserves the right to modify the route, rules and travel arrangements as deemed necessary before and during the rally. All participants are required to accept and obey any changes following the decisions by the rally director and announced by the organizers.
19. All garbage, used spares, worn tires, oils etc. must be separated and disposed of in designated areas in each camp or in other authorized areas for waste. Failing to dispose of garbage etc. in authorized places may be subject to time penalties, relegation to the adventure category or disqualification from the rally. The rally director is the only person to judge and decide a penalty.
20. Real Way to Dakar by Intercontinental Rally reserves the right to use any photograph/video taken during the rally, without the expressed written permission of those included within the photograph/video. Real Way to Dakar may use the photograph/video in publications or other media material produced, used or contracted by the rally including but not limited to: website, social media, newsletters, brochures, magazines, presentations, etc.

Any person or organization not affiliated with The Real Way to Dakar may not use, copy, alter or modify Real Way to Dakar photographs, graphics, videography or other, similar reproductions or recordings without the advance written permission of an authorized designee from the rally.

B) Documents and technical requirements

The requirements for the document and technical inspections are the same for all categories in the rally.

B1) Documents and technical requirements – Documents

1. Every driver must hold and bring a standard and international driving license for the type of the registered vehicle.
2. Every vehicle must have and bring a valid registration certificate.
3. Every vehicle must have and bring a valid international insurance certificate. (E.g. the Green Card valid for Morocco)
4. The vehicle must be registered in the driver's name. In case the vehicle is not registered in the driver's name, the driver must hold a French translation of the registration document validated by the registered owner of the vehicle or a document giving the driver all necessary legal rights to travel in and between the countries of the rally and validated by the owner of the vehicle.

5. Every participant must hold and bring a passport valid for at least 6 months after the completion of the event and must meet visa requirements of each of the countries visited.
6. Every participant must hold and bring a valid travel insurance for the countries visited.
7. Every participant registered in the full categories to Dakar must hold and bring an International Vaccination Card with recorded vaccination against Yellow Fever as well as other requirements of the countries visited. This may differ based on your country of origin. Please be aware, that some countries may require documentation of participants having received a corona vaccination or taken a valid corona-test before entering.
8. Every participant is fully responsible for his/her own border crossing and must provide all the required documents and fees to the border officials.

B2) Documents and technical requirements - Technical

1. Every vehicle must pass the technical and document inspections before the start of the rally. Only vehicles that satisfy all the requirements will be allowed to start. (With minor issues and with the specific permission of the Rally Director waivers can be granted at the start.)
2. Every vehicle must be equipped with mandatory equipment including a GPS navigation tool, a regional map and a first aid kit with:
 - First aid plaster
 - Antiseptic solution
 - Sterile gauze
 - Elastic bandages
 - Thermal blanket
 - Anti-inflammatory and analgesics medic actions
 - Pain killers

The first aid kit needs to be with you every day on the track along with supplies of water and food for at least 24 hours.

3. Additionally, cars and trucks must be equipped with a fire extinguisher, rope, tools for common repairs and equipment to extract the vehicle from sand and mud.
4. All participants must use adequate personal protective equipment. Motorcyclist must wear a helmet at all times while riding – even in camp. Participants in the car race category must wear helmets from stage start to stage finish. We strongly recommend that participants in the adventure category also wear helmets.

5. All participants must be in adequate health to start each stage. The Rally Director can at his discretion disqualify anyone deemed injured, sick or by other reasons unable to participate in a specific stage or continue in the rally.
6. All vehicles must meet minimal range requirements. Vehicles that do not meet range requirements may be relegated to the adventure category.

6.1. The minimum range for cars and trucks is 600 km.

6.2. Minimum range required for motorcycles, quads and buggies is 250 km.

In the event that there are no refueling opportunities on the route the organizers will carry your (own) jerry cans with your (own) fuel for your refueling at designated refueling points.

Each participant must bring at least 2 jerry cans for this purpose to be able to hand in one full jerry can every evening at the briefing for the days where it is needed. Information about refueling opportunities will be given every night at the briefings for the following day.

6.3. Jerry cans must be fabricated from metal or military spec plastic. Fuel must be transported in vehicle tanks, jerry cans or other approved containers at all times.

C) Race category regulation

1. Each vehicle is registered for the race according to the VIN number. Substituting the frame of the vehicles and there by changing the VIN number during the rally is not allowed as well as changing the engine capacity and thereby the relevant race category.
2. All vehicles in the race category must be equipped with a GPS receiver that must be turned on and storing the current track data for the entire duration of each stage. At the request of the race director the device must be made available to the organization for data download. This information may be used to verify compliance with the rules, specifically obeying speed limits and reaching of control points. The organization is setup for downloading and inspecting data from Garmin devices. If another brand is used the owner must be able to provide GPX formatted data.
3. All vehicles must traverse the entire stage (special sections as well as any liaison sections) under the power of their own engine. In special sections short recoveries and towing with the help from others and for a distance up to 30m are accepted. Failure to traverse the sections or getting towed for any portion of the stage longer than 30 meters results in time penalties as described in the timing section.

4. Participants must enter the special section start corral 1 minute prior to their start time. The corral is marked by yellow and red flagging. Competitors must start at their assigned starting time. Early start is allowed only with agreement of the organizers.
5. Participants who are unable to start or to end race for an entire day's race or a special section can apply to be excused from the stage or section. Excuse card are available at briefings or at the start of a special section from the organizers. They must be filled and handed in personally to members of the organization on - or before - the assigned starting time for the first special section of the day.

In this situation the organizers will not respond to assistance requests before the team is back in the race in the next section the same day or the first section of the next day. Failure to notify the organizers about an excuse will result in relegation into the adventure category. Excuse from the day or a section can be given only three times (three sections) for the entire rally. If more excuses are needed the participant will be relegated to the adventure category.

6. If participants cannot make the time limit for special section 1 of a day, they will not be allowed to enter the special section 2 later that same day.
7. Repairs during the rally, including the replacement or rebuild of major components, are allowed without penalties as long as the VIN number and/or engine size is not changed.
8. Every vehicle must start each stage in a roadworthy and safe condition and meet the technical inspection requirements as they were accepted at the initial inspections.
9. The complete crew must be present for the duration of the stage. No team substitutions are allowed. The Rally Director must be informed about any technical or medical situation that may require a team to break up for any part of the rally.
10. Violation of competition regulations results in relegation to the adventure category.
11. All vehicles registered in the race category must do a minimum of 50% of the total numbers of control points during the rally as calculated by the end of the rally. If you are in the Lite Race category it is 50% of the control points in the lite race. If you do less than 50% of the control points you will be relegated to the adventure category as soon as you hit this limit.
12. If – for any reason – a special section is cancelled before or during a stage (e.g. bad weather) the timing of this special section will be neutralized. It is not allowed to start on a special section that has been cancelled and the service route must be used. Participants who start on a special section that has been cancelled will be relegated to the adventure category.
13. All vehicles must start and finish the rally by the power of their own engine.
14. Appeals and protests against incidents during the day's stages must be delivered within 1 hour after arriving at the stage finish if it concerns the race or 1 hour after publishing official

result of the stage if it concerns the timing or stage results.

After the filing and investigation, the Rally Director will make a decision. If the appeal is denied the person requesting the appeal will be fined 50€ to be paid before the participant can continue in the rally.

D) Race category regulations – Timing

1. In the Race category, the competitor's race against the clock while reaching a number of control points and completing the timed special sections within a given time limit.
2. Competitor time can be stopped only in case of medical assistance for other rally participants or by decision of the Rally Director.
3. The stage itinerary lists control points and waypoints. Only the control points are mandatory. The waypoints are provided only as navigational aids.
4. A control point is considered reached if you are within 50 m radius of the GPS coordinate specified.
5. Every stage has one or more timed special sections and liaison segments. Under certain circumstances (e.g. border crossing) a stage may be only a liaison without special sections.
6. Failure to start the first special section of the day on time will result in a time penalty of 5 minutes pr. 1 minute that you are late for the special - unless you filed an excuse for the stage or day. If you are more than 10 minutes late for your start, you will not be allowed to start that special section.

Race days with more than 1 special section may have a time limit to the first special section. If you do not meet the time limit for the first special section, you will not be allowed to start the second special section.

7. If you do not meet the time limit for the first special section, you are not allowed to drive the route through the racetrack and must reach camp via the service route.
8. Participants who do not complete a special section will be assigned a 10-hour penalty. Participants who do not complete an entire stage will be assigned a 20-hour penalty.
9. Failure to traverse the entire stage under own power, i.e. being towed, results in 4-hour penalty for the stage. Only short recoveries of up to 30 m in special sections are allowed.

10. If you do not reach a control point (within a 50m radius) you will get a 2 hours penalty for each control point you miss.
11. There are time penalties issued by the Rally Director for breaking traffic laws on public roads as well as other specified speed limits in locations disclosed during the briefings (e.g. villages, residential areas etc.).

For violation of speed limits there is a 2 minutes penalty for each km/h over the speed limit for the first 10 km/h over the limit, and a 5-minute penalty for each km/h over the limit for the next 10 km/h. And a two hour penalty for violations of more than 20 km/h over the speed limit. Other violations of local traffic laws will be penalized with time penalties after a decision made by the rally director.

12. At the request of the Rally Director the GPS device must be made available to the organization for GPS data download. This information may be used to verify compliance with the rules, specifically obeying speed limits and reaching of control points.

The organization is setup for downloading and inspecting data from Garmin devices. If another brand is used the owner must be able to provide GPX formatted data. Failure to provide the track data for the most recent stage will result in 8 hours penalty.

13. The rankings are based on the overall time of the sections you started including penalties.
14. The optional rally-start in Paris and the time spend from Paris to the formal registration and start in Morocco will not be included in the rankings and there is no timekeeping by the organizers before the start in Morocco.

E) Race category regulations - Itinerary, navigation and start card

1. At the evening briefing prior to every stage, participants will receive a stage itinerary in either paper form or as Garmin Mapsource file (.gdb).
2. Participants who choose to use the electronic format must provide a USB Flash drive to the organizers before the briefing and they will receive the drive after the briefing with the file on it. You need to bring two USB-sticks as you will hand in one USB-stick every time you collect the other for the next day.
3. Content of the itinerary
 - GPS coordinates for special section start and finish location.
 - Coordinates of control points.
 - Route way points.
 - Locations of refueling stations along the route.
 - Mobile and satellite phone numbers to contact organizers (Paper version).

- Other important guidelines for the stage (Paper version).
4. Participants will also receive information on
- Precise time to start each special section.
 - Time limit for each special section.
 - Time penalties associated with the failure to reach each control point if they are different from the general rules.
 - If a scoring or start card is used it must be handed over to a designated organization team member at the beginning and end of each special section and at the end of the stage. If the scoring card is lost, you will receive a 1 hour penalty.

F) Race category regulations - Technical and medical assistance

1. Participants may receive technical assistance from another participant or service team at any time during the race without penalty.
2. Every vehicle in the Race category must be equipped with a device for requesting medical or technical assistance. The device [e.g. a Yellow Brick or SPOT] will be supplied by the organizers and it is mandatory for all vehicles to bring and activate the device every day to allow tracking. Information will be given at briefings and must be followed.
3. At the time of registration all participants pay a deposit of 300€ to pay for any loss or damage to the tracker. If the device is lost or damaged the organizers will substitute or repair the device before the participant is allowed to continue. After the rally, the deposit will be reimbursed to the participant, only deducting costs for any damage or loss of the equipment.
4. If you request technical or medical assistance from the organizers during a stage or special section – even if they are standing in front of you – you must push the bottom on the device indicating that you need and want assistance.
5. Anyone who requests technical or medical assistance from the organizers by using the device will be relegated to the adventure category. (Except for legitimate calling for the other rally participants in medical case.)
6. Requesting medical assistance in case of a technical break down is considered as reckless endangerment of other participants and will result in disqualification from the rally.
7. In case of a medical issue our medic team operating in the tracks will get to you as soon as possible. If you are not able to continue on your own, you will be transported to camp or to a medical facility or hospital for treatment if necessary. Our medic team will then resume their support of other participants in the tracks. We recommend that you get in touch with your travel insurance company at this point, to make sure you get the assistance from them that you need to sort out the situation.

If you have to exit the rally due to medical issues, we may have the opportunity to bring small motorbikes to camp and we will try to tow quads, cars, atv's etc. if the terrain allows this. In case of heavy bikes (e.g. >800cc), vehicles that cannot be towed or terrain that does not allow towing, the organizers will assist you getting in contact with local assistance to get your vehicle out. However, this is your responsibility and must be paid for by you.

8. In case of a technical issue our team in the tracks will get to you and try to help you sort the issue. If it is not possible to sort the issue, we will transport you to the camp. We may have the opportunity to bring small motorbikes to camp with you and we will try to tow quads, cars, ATV's etc. if the terrain allows such operation. In case of heavy bikes (e.g. >800cc), vehicles that cannot be towed or terrain that does not allow towing the organizers will assist you getting in contact with local assistance to get your vehicle out, but you must organize and pay for this service yourself.
9. In case of technical or medical issues that means that you will not be able to continue as a participant with your own vehicle, you must organize your personal transport as well as the transport of your vehicle. However, if you find a way to transport yourself from camp to camp, you are welcome to stay for the duration of the rally.
10. If you - for any reason - leave a vehicle behind in the desert or elsewhere and don't bring it out of the country you imported it to, the organizers may have to pay for the rescue of the vehicle and may be subject to a fine from local authorities. In this case, you must pay for any costs incurred by the organization related to the rescuing, export and other costs and fines of the vehicle you registered to the rally.

G) Adventure category regulations

1. Participants who registered for the adventure category as well as participants who originally registered in the race category but has been relegated to the adventure category must follow the rules of the adventure category.
2. Adventure category participants on Moto is limited to max 950 ccm
3. Prior to every stage all participants will receive a stage itinerary, listing GPS route waypoints as well as a starting card with the designated starting time and location.

Participants in the adventure category must attend a special adventure briefing after the race briefing. If – for any reason – participants in the adventure category do not attend the adventure briefing, he or she can send somebody else (e.g. member of their service team or a fellow rider). Regardless, the participant must follow the instructions given at the briefing. Failure to do so may result in disqualification from the rally.

4. The printed itinerary will also list other important guidelines for the stage including mobile and satellite phone contacts for organizers. The route will be the same as the Race category. Every day there may be different options and a variety of routes to follow, and the specific options may vary from participant to participant based on the type of vehicle, driving skills etc. Some extreme areas can be skipped, if possible, in the terrain and some areas has no way around and has to be driven.
5. If you choose to leave the race route or you choose to drive back and use the service route, this will be at your own responsibility and risk.
6. There will be days where you must take the service route. Some terrain demands race category skills and don't give the opportunity to skip the rougher parts.
7. For stages with double sections, participants in the adventure category can only expect to be able to do the first part of the route. The different stage options will be given at each adventure briefing.

8. Participants in the adventure category can on any given day choose to do the service route. This will often be the best option in terms of the quality of the road, the distance you need to travel as well as the best option for visiting towns and shopping for food etc.

If you choose another route between camps than the designated route or the service route, the organizers are not obliged to assist you in the event that you need technical or medical assistance.

9. Participants are required to arrive at the bivouac within the set time limit and notify the organizers if they are delayed or choose not to stay in the rally camp.
10. The organizers are not obliged to assist the participants after the stage time limit if the participant fails to notify the organizers about the late arrival.
11. Every vehicle in the adventure category must be equipped with a device for requesting medical or technical assistance. The device [e.g. a Yellow Brick or SPOT] will be supplied by the organizers and it is mandatory for all vehicles to bring and activate the device every day to allow tracking. Information will be given at briefings and must be followed.

At the time of registration all participants pay a deposit of 300€ to pay for any loss or damage to the tracker. If the device is lost or damaged the organizers will substitute or repair the device before the participant is allowed to continue. After the rally the deposit will be repaid to the participant after paying for any damage or loss of this equipment.

12. The participants can request medical or technical assistance from the organization once (except for legitimate calling for the other rally participants in medical case) for the duration of the rally using the device, satellite phone or mobile phone if service is available.

- 12.1. The participant is allowed to continue after requesting assistance from the organizers at their own risk.
- 12.2. Organizers will not respond to additional assistance requests.
13. Requesting medical assistance in case of a technical break down is considered as reckless endangerment of other participants and will result in disqualification from the rally.

