

OVERLAND | American Challenge Pre-trip Training

Preparing for your 3,000-mile ride across the country

Training for the American Challenge requires focus, time management and dedication. In the months leading up to trip start, you will build your fitness and familiarity with bicycling by increasing your mileage progressively. Training is essential in preparing you for a healthy and enjoyable experience on this challenging trip. Use this calendar to track your training over the eight weeks before your trip. Hand in your completed calendar to your leaders upon arrival at trip start. Please contact Luke Costley (luke@overlandsummers.com) with questions.

Responsible Riding Practices

In addition to building fitness and familiarity with bicycling, preparation for the American Challenge includes increasing your awareness of responsible riding practices. Your Overland leaders will review safety practices and reinforce responsible riding at trip start and each day of riding.

The following guidelines have been developed by the League of American Bicyclists to help manage the risks associated with biking on roads; however, managing risks does not eliminate them. We encourage you to follow these guidelines when training for your trip, and we also encourage you to consult with local bike shops for route and riding advice.

FOLLOW THE LAW

You have the same rights and responsibilities as drivers. Obey traffic signals and stop signs. Ride with traffic; use the rightmost lane headed in the direction you are going.

BE PREDICTABLE

Make your intentions clear to everyone on the road. Ride in a straight line and don't swerve between parked cars. Signal turns, and check behind you well before turning or changing lanes.

BE VISIBLE

Ride where people can see you and wear bright clothing. Use a front white light, red rear light and reflectors. Make eye contact with others and don't ride on sidewalks. When possible, ride with others.

THINK AHEAD

Watch for turning vehicles and ride outside the door zone of parked cars. Look out for debris, potholes, and other road hazards. Cross railroad tracks at right angles.

RIDE READY

Check that your tires are sufficiently inflated, brakes are working, chain runs smoothly, and quick release levers are closed. Carry tools and supplies that are appropriate for your ride. Wear a helmet.

Adapted from "Rules of the Road," <http://www.bikeleague.org/>

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Preparing for Biking

Daily rides on the American Challenge average 85 miles over varying terrain, and the longest day is approximately 120 miles (exact mileage may vary by group). The itinerary also includes buffer days to allow for delays en route (most groups will find that they spend this day partially or completely off of the bikes).

Overland bicycle tours are self-contained—there is no van support except for one section in eastern California. You will carry all of your belongings, plus some group gear and food, on a sturdy rack mounted over the back wheel of your bike. You will hang panniers (these are saddlebags, pronounced “pan-yers”) off the rack and attach gear like your sleeping bag and sleeping pad to the top of the rack using bungee cords. On average, you will carry about 40 pounds of equipment on your bike (not including the weight of the bike). Students are expected to be complete the daily mileage, every day of the trip.

All pre-trip training rides must be completed using the bike, pedals and shoes you will use on the American Challenge. **All rides should be fully loaded with all of your gear and clothing.** Please note that training on an indoor stationary bike is not a sufficient form of training. All loaded training rides must be at an average speed of at least 12 miles per hour. You must be able to maintain (or exceed) 12 miles an hour fully loaded on terrain that includes hills. Groups typically average 12 miles per hour while riding. You will start riding at first light, taking short breaks during the day, and complete the day's ride in the late afternoon to early evening. A 12-mile-per-hour pace makes it possible for the group to get each day's miles done and have time for snacks, lunch, delays, breakdowns, and, at day's end, for essential rest and recovery.

Pre-trip training

- **Eight** weeks before your trip: two rides a week (on consecutive days) with loaded panniers of two hours each (24 miles over varied terrain); try to ride for two hours without stopping to rest.
- **Six** weeks before your trip: two rides a week (on consecutive days) with loaded panniers of three hours each (36 miles over varied terrain); try to ride for three hours with one five minute stop for rest after 20 miles.
- **Four** weeks before your trip: three rides (on consecutive days) with loaded panniers of three hours each (36 miles over varied terrain); at this point in your training, you should be able to ride for three hours with just one five minute stop for rest after 20 miles.
- **Three** weeks before your trip: four rides (on consecutive days) with loaded panniers: three rides of three hours each (36 miles over varied terrain), and one ride with loaded panniers of four hours (48 miles); complete each of these rides with one five minute stop for rest every 20 miles.
- **Two** weeks before your trip: five rides (on consecutive days) with loaded panniers: three rides of three hours each (36 miles over varied terrain), and two rides with loaded panniers of four hours each (48 miles over varied terrain); complete each of these rides with one five minute stop for rest every 20 miles.
- **One** week before your trip: six rides (on consecutive days) with loaded panniers: three rides of three hours each (36 miles over varied terrain), two rides with loaded panniers of four hours each (48 miles over varied terrain), and one ride with loaded panniers of 60 miles (five hours over varied terrain); complete each of these rides with one five minute stop for rest every 20 miles.

Name:

American Challenge Pre-trip Training | Weeks 8–5 before your trip

	Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Weds.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
8 weeks out	Date: Duration: Miles:	Date: Duration: Miles:	Date: Duration: Miles:	Date: Duration: Miles:	Date: Duration: Miles:	Date: Duration: Miles:	Date: Duration: Miles:
7 weeks out	Date: Duration: Miles:	Date: Duration: Miles:	Date: Duration: Miles:	Date: Duration: Miles:	Date: Duration: Miles:	Date: Duration: Miles:	Date: Duration: Miles:
6 weeks out	Date: Duration: Miles:	Date: Duration: Miles:	Date: Duration: Miles:	Date: Duration: Miles:	Date: Duration: Miles:	Date: Duration: Miles:	Date: Duration: Miles:
5 weeks out	Date: Duration: Miles:	Date: Duration: Miles:	Date: Duration: Miles:	Date: Duration: Miles:	Date: Duration: Miles:	Date: Duration: Miles:	Date: Duration: Miles:

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Name: _____

American Challenge Pre-trip Training | Weeks 4–1 before your trip

Sun.

Mon.

Tues.

Weds.

Thurs.

Fri.

Sat.

4

weeks out

Date:

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Student signature _____