

Race Rules and Runners Guide: 2026 West Highland Way Race

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1. Sporting Conduct

The West Highland Way Race is an event that welcomes runners and crew into the West Highland Way Race Family. The race promotes and values community cooperation and fair play. We require all participants to behave respectfully towards the environment, other participants, local communities and event staff. The West Highland Way Race Organisation (the “race organisation”) reserves the right to exclude from the race any participant whose behavior may affect the management and/or proper functioning of the event. In such a case, the athlete will not be entitled to a refund.

2. Registration and Start

Registration Logistics

- **When:** Friday, 19 June 2026, between 9:00 pm and 12:00 midnight.
- **Where:** St Joseph’s RC Church Hall, Milngavie (opposite the station).
- **Requirements:**
 - Photographic ID is mandatory to collect your race number.
 - One member of your **support crew must attend** to receive their vehicle permit.
- **Early Check-in:** Runners are encouraged to register as early as possible to reduce congestion. Please leave the hall immediately after finishing the process.
- **Merchandise:** Runners will receive a goody bag and can collect any pre-purchased merchandise
- **Drop Bags:** Must be deposited at Milngavie Station car park by **11:45 pm Friday**. Drop bags will not be accepted after this time.

Race Start

- **Gathering:** 12:45 am at the bridge beside Milngavie Station.
- **Briefing:** A short mandatory briefing will take place at the start line.
- **Start Time:** Exactly 1:00 am (Saturday morning).

3. Checkpoints and Cut-off Times

Electronic timing is used at all checkpoints. Cut-off times are strictly enforced. Any runner not reaching a checkpoint within the allocated time will be withdrawn from the race. For clarity, a runner arriving at Beinglas at 12:00:00 race time will be allowed to continue; a runner arriving at 12:00:01 will be withdrawn.

Checkpoint	Distance (miles)	Race Clock Cut-off	What3Words Location
Balmaha	19	5h 0m	///sums.touched.shuffles
Rowardennan	27	7h 30m	///marble.handover.microfilm
Inversnaid	35	No Cut-off	///attitudes.cycled.revamping
Beinglas Farm	42	12h 0m	///reforming.mailings.conjured
Tyndrum	53	16h 0m	///file.appealing.runner
Bridge of Orchy	60	18h 30m	///slurs.secret.frostbite
Glencoe Ski Centre	71	23h 0m	///movie.untrained.object
Kinlochleven	81	28h 0m	///refreshed.mole.splice
Lundavra	88	32h 30m	///handbags.pining.juniors
Fort William (Finish)	95	35h 0m	///husband.greed.lousy

Force majeure: In event of any circumstance or event beyond the reasonable control of the race organisation, and which could not reasonably be avoided or overcome, the race organisation may stop, pause or re-route the race as appropriate.

Runner welfare: If a marshal is concerned about the condition of any runner, this will be referred to the Race Medical team, or the Race Director. They will determine what action needs to be taken: this could include withdrawal from the race. Such instructions would only be given where they were considered necessary for the runner's own safety. It is a condition of entry that any such instruction must be followed, and the decision of the Race Doctor, Race Safety Officer or Race Director is final.

Retiring from Race: You must notify the nearest checkpoint timer and return your tracker/SI-card. If retiring between points, call Race Control immediately.

4. Mandatory Kit

Kit checks may be carried out at any time. Failure to comply may result in a penalty including the runner's withdrawal from the race. Kit requirements apply to both the runner and any support runners

Race numbers

Your race number must always be visible. Your medical and emergency contact information must be written on the back of your number. Your number must be positioned on your front at all times. It should be displayed over your clothing. We recommend the use of a race belt or similar for convenience. You will also be given a number for your support runner. If you have a support runner, your support runner must also wear this number. If changing support runners they must transfer the number to the next runner.

Minimum kit to be carried at all times

- Emergency foil blanket.
- Fully charged mobile phone with emergency numbers:
 - **Race Safety Officer (Sean Stone):** 07768 642314
 - **Race Control:** 01397 470070
- Waterproof jacket (with taped seams)
- Water (250ml minimum)
- Spare food
- Working head torch with spare batteries. (may be carried by crew in daylight hours)

Bad Weather Kit (Must be available if required)

- Full body waterproof clothing (trousers and jacket).
- Additional warm layers, hat, and gloves.
- Water
- Spare food

Each runner is expected to be semi self-sufficient. Food and drink needs to be provided by the runner and carried by the support crew or put in a drop bag.

"Bad Weather" Protocol

If the Race Director calls for "Bad Weather Kit", **all** items above (including waterproof trousers, hat, and gloves) must be carried by all runners and support runners on their person for the duration of the race.

Poles

- The use of poles is permitted
- Poles may not be used in the first 4 miles of the race before reaching the public road after Carbeth Huts
- Poles may not be placed in drop bags

5. Route Variations for 2026

The West Highland Way is well waymarked. Any places that involve slight deviation, eg to a checkpoint, will have additional fluorescent race arrows to provide guidance.

While the race generally follows the official West Highland Way trail, runners **must** follow these specific variations which will all be marked:

1. **Rowardennan to Inversnaid:** The "Low Route" is closed due to forestry works. **The HIGH ROUTE must be used.** This is the route used by the Highland Fling and will be signed. The low route is currently fenced off so it isn't possible to go wrong!
2. **Tyndrum (Mile 53):** Turn right at the road before *By The Way* campsite, follow the pavement past the *Real Food Café*, cross at the pelican crossing, and rejoin the trail at *Brodies Stores*.
3. **Glencoe (Mile 70):** Take the left fork towards the Ski Centre car park for the checkpoint. Rejoin the route by following the main road down the hill.
4. **Kinlochleven (Mile 80):** Follow the route past Blackwater Hostel/Ice Factor to the Leven Centre.
5. **Glen Nevis (Mile 93):** Stay on the Land Rover track and follow signs for the Braveheart car park then to the road. **Do not** follow the waymarker for the forest turn-off.
6. **The Finish:** Located inside the **Nevis Centre**. Follow signs past the railway and bus stations.

6. Support Crew and Vehicle Rules

Expected Behaviours

The first rule for support vehicles and crews is to apply common sense and always be considerate to residents and business owners in the villages and towns we pass through.

Please also remember that you are a member of this race community and a representative of the West Highland Way Race.

Just because you are supporting a runner does not give you the right to park inconsiderately or inconvenience locals or other road users.

Runners are required to provide details of their support crew in the run up to the event, with the form needing to be completed and submitted once the final instructions have been issued. **FOR 2026 this includes a Support Runner/ Crew Acknowledgment and Declaration** (which covers all support runners and support crew members). You will not be allowed to take part in the event unless these details have been provided. Please submit your details using the designated forms and not by any other way: it makes it much easier for the organising team to access the information if required on race day

Crew Requirements

- A motorized support vehicle is a **condition of entry**.
- We recommend at least one crew member for the first half and two for the second half.
- **Mandatory Crew Meeting Points:** Registration, Tyndrum, Glencoe, Kinlochleven, and the Finish.
- **Prohibited Area:** Crews **must not** meet runners on the A82 between Beinglas Farm and the big gate at Bogle Glen (Crianlarich). This is strictly enforced.
- **Motorhomes:** large motorhomes are not permitted for travel to Rowardennan, Auchtertyre, Lundavra or Bridge of Orchy.
- **Parking:** there are several car parks on the route where parking charges apply, including the finish at the Nevis Centre in Fort William. Please note that those charges need to be paid as your vehicle race permit does not exempt you from any parking charges.
- Crews should be prepared to collect their runner at a checkpoint if the runner has decided to withdraw from the race. Crews should therefore have arrangements in place to keep in touch with their runner by phone.
- **Kinlochleven:** The checkpoint in Kinlochleven is indoors. No more than two supporters will be allowed to meet their runner in the Centre,

- **Parking for support vehicles at Tyndrum:**
 - We have access to the car park at the Muthu Hotels in Lower Station Road, Tyndrum. All race traffic should use this car park. It will be signposted, please follow the marshals' instructions.
 - You should not park in the car park of premises such as the Green Welly, Real Food Café or By The Way in Tyndrum unless you are a customer of those establishments, and even then you should not park there for an extended period.
- **Parking for support vehicles at Bridge of Orchy:**
 - You must park in either the Sport Scotland car park just before the Bridge of Orchy Hotel or in the Forestry Land Scotland car park just over the bridge immediately after the hotel. Both car parks are on the left as you arrive in BofO heading north.
 - **Race vehicles will not be allowed to turn right towards the railway station**

Support Runners

- **No support runners allowed before Tyndrum.**
- Support runners are only permitted if you leave checkpoints after these race times:
 - **Tyndrum:** After 11h 0m (12:00 pm)
 - **Bridge of Orchy:** After 12h 30m (1:30 pm)
 - **Glencoe:** After 14h 45m (3:45 pm)
 - **Kinlochleven:** After 17h 30m (6:30 pm)
- If you are ahead of these times, your support crew is only allowed to run with you in the area one quarter of a mile before the checkpoint and one quarter of a mile after the checkpoint and are not allowed to run with you at any other times.
- A support runner must not carry the mandatory kit for the runner they are supporting – the runner must always carry their own mandatory kit.
- Support runners must be independently capable of completing their section unassisted. Support runners must not rely on the runner or any other person for assistance in completing their section.
- Support runners must follow all instructions given by Race Officials immediately and without exception.
- In the event of adverse weather or deteriorating conditions, support runners must comply immediately with any instruction to wear waterproofs, pair up, turn back, or leave the course.

- Failure to comply with these conduct requirements may result in the runner being withdrawn from the race.
- If a support runner is injured or otherwise incapacitated whilst on the course:
 - The support runner must contact Race Control immediately using the emergency numbers saved on their mobile phone.
 - The runner's support crew is primarily responsible for arranging any assistance required, and support runners should ensure that their support crew is aware of which section they are covering before they join the course.
 - The race organisation's medical team may assist in an emergency but are primarily responsible for the welfare of runners

Support Runner and Crew Declaration Form

- Every runner must inform the organisation of the Contact details of their primary support crew members. Completed forms must be submitted online by 6pm Friday 12 June 2026.
- This declaration form also requires the runner to confirm each support runner has sufficient fitness and competence to complete their section independently, to acknowledge the inherent risks of the outdoor mountain environment, to confirm that they will carry the mandatory kit set out above, to agree to comply with these race rules and all marshal instructions and to provide emergency contact details.

Liability

- The race organisation does not accept liability for any loss of, or damage to, property (including vehicles) belonging to or used by runners, support crews or support runners, or for any indirect or consequential losses arising from participation in or attendance at the event.
- Runners, Support Runners and crew members attend and participate in the event entirely at their own risk in respect of all inherent risks of the outdoor mountain environment, including but not limited to weather conditions, terrain, remoteness, and the physical demands of the sections covered.

7. Logistics: Drop Bags, Water and Trackers

Drop Bags

- **Locations:** Balmaha, Rowardennan, and Beinglas ONLY.
- **Deadline:** Must be deposited at Milngavie Station car park by **11:45 pm Friday**.
- **Contents:** No poles. No water. Bags will not be returned.
- **Intermediate aid stations**

Aid stations which are not mandatory meeting points for crew will offer:

- Water
- Soft drink
- Snacks

Full details will be published on the race website

Trackers & Timing

- **SI-Card (Timing):** Must be dibbed at every checkpoint. Failure to hand this in at the finish/retirement results in a **£30 fee** and potential ban.
- **GPS Tracker:** Must be kept in the provided waterproof bag and stowed in an external pocket. For friends and family that wish to follow you can do so via a smartphone, tablet or laptop. Details of the link will follow

8. Medical and Safety

Please ensure you have read, and taken heed of, the medical advice document published on the race website. This also applies to support runners. In summary:

- **NSAIDs:** Do **not** use Ibuprofen, Naproxen, or Diclofenac. These can cause serious kidney issues during ultra-marathons and may lead to disqualification.
- **Hydration:** Drink to thirst only to avoid over-hydration (hyponatremia).
- **Cloudy Eye:** Prolonged exposure to the elements can cause blurred vision. Wearing eye protection (sunglasses/clear lenses) is recommended. If affected, report to the medical team.
- **Jewellery:** Remove all rings from fingers and toes due to expected swelling.

9. Environmental and Community Standards

- **Litter:** Zero tolerance. Carry all litter to the next checkpoint.
- **Conic Hill:** You **must** stay on the reinforced path. Do not run on the grass. This will be enforced by marshals
- **Noise:** Keep noise to an absolute minimum in Drymen, Kinlochleven, and Fort William or when passing any residential property during night hours
- **Alcohol:** Prohibited in the Nevis Centre and its car park.
- **Earphones:** these are permitted but you are responsible for ensuring you can hear what is going on around you. **Earphones must be removed** at checkpoints, at road crossings, when approaching marshals, and at all times when running on public roads.
- **Dogs:** **Dogs** are not allowed to run with any competitor at any stage of the race, nor are they allowed to run with any person who is supporting a runner. This is a condition of our event insurance.

10. The Finish and Prizegiving

- The race finishes **inside** the Nevis Centre in Fort William. At the finish your time will be recorded and you will be given a printout of your splits. Showers are available for runners and crew, and tea and coffee will be available.
- The prize-giving ceremony will take place in the Nevis Centre in Fort William (same venue as the race finish) at 12 noon on Sunday 22 June. It is expected to last about an hour.
- Please try to attend – it is a great occasion where every finisher is presented with his or her goblet and helps continue the great ‘family’ feel of the event.
- If you are unable to attend, please let a marshal at the finish know and we will arrange for you to take your goblet away with you.
- For those staying in Fort William, there will be the chance to meet up for drinks and some food on Sunday evening. This is an informal gathering and all are welcome – it will take place from 7pm in The Great Glen, 104 High Street, Fort William.

11. Race merchandise

All runners will receive a race garment and a race buff in their goody bag. Additional race merchandise for you or as a 'thank you' for your support crew will be available for purchase by the end of May. We will send a separate mail and post on our social channels as soon as it becomes available. Meantime there are a few ongoing items available on the race shop web page <https://www.westhighlandwayrace.com/shop/>

12. 2027 Race Entry

The entry procedure for the 2027 race will be like this year, with entries open in October 2026. Please note that for 2027 the entry requirement is changing. All entrants will be required to have completed a minimum of 90 miles in no more than 2 off-road ultra marathons within the official time limits for those races, in the period from 1 January 2024 to the date the entry is submitted.