



WELCOME TO THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF THE FIAT RACING CHALLENGE!!

Hopefully this Getting Started Guide will answer all your queries about whether or not the Fiat Racing Challenge is the ideal series for you (TIP: Answer = Yes) and give you all the information you need to start what will no doubt be the best fun you've ever had - Honest!

You should find a set of Rules on the 'Downloads' Section of the website (www.fiatracing.com). Make sure you download a copy for reference and for a description of the sort of Cars & Modifications allowed in the FRC.

The FRC Prides itself on being one of the friendliest club racing series available in the UK, if you get lost trying to get yourself started with us please feel free to contact us using the below information, we will usually be able to help you out there and then or alternatively put you in touch with an experienced competitor in your area who will be more than happy to help.

Series Information

Series Website	:	www.fiatracing.com
Email	:	info@fiatracing.com
Series Organiser	:	ALAN JONES FIAT RACING CHALLENGE 68 TELFORDS YARD LONDON E1W 2BQ
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Other Contact Information

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1 - Getting Started

Step 1 – Contact The MSA

Before you actually start your route to F1 or perhaps F1at racing, you'll need a licence. To do this you must contact the MSA to order your Go Racing Starter Pack, you can do this two ways:

Phone : +44 (0)1753 765000
Online : [Click Here](#)

Step 2 – Medical Examination

Once you have received this pack fill in your details and you will need to complete a fairly simple medical examination which can usually be carried out by your local GP. Once he has carried out the medical he/she will fill out the medical section of your license application form.

Step 3 – ARDS Course

You will need to attend an ARDS (Association of Racing Drivers School) Course which involves a written and driven assessment. The Written exam consists of 2 parts, the first part tests your knowledge of flag signals (you must get 100% in this section) the second part asks some common sense questions which have a multiple choice answers (in this section the pass rate is 80%) The driven assessment involves and ARDS Instructor driving you around the circuit explaining the basics of Motor Racing Techniques, you will then swap and be asked to drive..... It is worth noting at this point that you are not going to convince your instructor that you are the long lost 3rd Schumacher brother, all you are required to demonstrate is that you have **safe** control of the car at all times and can follow basic instructions concerning braking and racing lines, one thing that is guaranteed is that if you crash you will fail!!! So don't! Once you've done your ARDS (and passed, which it's pretty hard not to) you just need to send the completed form and a fat cheque (this will be a recurring theme) to the RACMSA and they will send you the licence.

CONGRATULATIONS!!!!!! You're ready to go Racing!!!!..... Hmmmmmm well actually, not quite yet!!!

Step 4 – Contact The BRSCC

You will need to join the BRSCC (The BRSCC Organise each of the Meetings we attend) - To do this you must contact the BRSCC, you can do this two ways:

Telephone : 01732 780100
Online : [Click Here](#)

Once you complete the form, send it back with a big fat cheque and they'll make you a RACING MEMBER- anything less just ain't good enough

Step 5 – Contact The FIAT Racing Challenge

Then you'll need to join the world's favourite and most exclusive club, The Fiat Racing Challenge...that's us! To do this you must complete the Registration form, this can be downloaded from the 'Downloads' section of the FRC Website. Once completed, send back the application form together with a cheque for just £80 (notice the absence of the big fat bit!)

CONGRATULATIONS!!!!!! You're ready to go Racing!!!!.....hmmmmm almost there!!!

Step 6 – Find A Car To Race

If you don't have a car you can buy one from another competitor or get one built. Like wise you can build your own, in which case we suggest you read the rules..... Twice. Full details of cars for sale are on our website under 'Classifieds'. You can also hire cars from teams currently running in the series. Please email info@fiatracing.com for details of teams who offer this service.

Step 7 – Safety Equipment

You will need some trendy race clothing and safety stuff before you can get on to the track. You can get this from the normal suppliers but if you deal with Demon Tweaks and tell our designated sales man, Chris Rhodes (01978 663 043) that you're a paid up member of the Fiat Racing Challenge, he'll give you a discount...once he's checked with me that you are in fact a paid up member and not some scoundrel who is trying to abuse our good (ish- everything's relative) name.

Step 8 – Sticker Pack From The FRC

As part of this pack we will supply you with the Official Championship Stickers and all you need to do is stick them on in the right place. You'll get a sun strip, BRSCC stickers, Sponsors Stickers and Website Sticker. Make sure you put them on well before the day of the meeting because otherwise you'll forget and get in a tiz which is never a good start. You'll also discover that it's very difficult to put stickers on when it's pissing down with rain and your entire pit crew have retired to the bar. **We do not supply**, (which means you'll have to buy them) Race Numbers, Rookie Cross's, Tow Stickers, Emergency Cut Off Stickers etc. All of which you will need, so get them well in advance or risk failing scrutineering at the first attempt

CONGRATULATIONS!!!!!! You're ready to go Racing!!!!..... ..provided you haven't run out of money already!!

Don't be disheartened most of the above is one off stuff; once you have got to this point life becomes a bit easier and a lot more fun!

2 - Entering a Race

Step 1 – Race Entry

If you want to enter a race (and let's be honest, there's not much point joining us otherwise) the best thing to do is to get on with it. Firstly, you'll see on the entry forms that there is an opening date and a closing date. Unlike Tesco's, races are not open all the time. There are a number of good reasons to enter as soon as possible. Firstly, it'll save you money. Strangely, whilst you can still enter once the entry is officially closed, (stop me if I've lost you already), it'll cost you more. Secondly, it makes it easier for the organisers of the meeting- they need to know some time in advance how many cars to expect. You'll soon notice that the clubs that enter late get the duff slots on the time table and the crap part of the paddock- if they know 4 weeks before the meeting that 25 pristine Fiats and their equally immaculate drivers will be attending, then they will treat us somewhat better than if 20 people call on the last day to see if there are any spaces left. To this end, being the fair and reasonable people we are, we aim to ensure that if you enter a race, you get exactly what you pay for.... i.e. a race. If you enter late you may find that the grid is full and you're only a reserve.

We proceed strictly on a first come first served basis...it doesn't matter how good a driver you are, if you can't enter on time, you run the risk of not getting a place on the grid. Please note that the entry form, duly completed and accompanied by the inevitable big fat cheque by way of the entry fee is sent to the secretary of the meeting, whose address is on the form, not me. If you have a problem filling the form in. i.e. a marked reluctance to write the cheque out etc., let me know. The most common question asked is "what is my permanent number?" This is the car number that I allocated to you when you were kind enough to enter the series which you were, if I remember rightly, just about to do.

Once you have sent your form off, you should get an acknowledgement from the secretary confirming that you're in. About a week before the race you'll get some tickets, some vehicle passes and a list of other entrants together with final instructions. Notwithstanding the tendency to bin everything except the tickets, it does make sense to read the instructions. They will confirm the timetable, the paddock plan and IMPORTANTLY, additional rules for the meeting- such as the new drivers briefing, little things that can result in you getting sent home with a smacked arse if you contravene them etc. Read them, keep them and bring them to the meeting.

Step 2 - Getting To The Circuit

Once you've got the car looking ship shape, ask "why is my car looking like a ship?", then chuck it on the trailer and off you go. Remember. It takes a damn sight longer to get to the circuit with a car on a trailer than it does without, so leave plenty of time, otherwise you'll end up in a crap part of the paddock. If you are really brave and have a street legal car that you intend to drive all the way on the road, remember the following

- a) You must cover entirely the race numbers
- b) you'll have no spoiler left
- c) find a trailer for next time.

Before you set off, make sure you have everything- it sounds simple but it makes sense to do a list. It's easy to forget something and it could lead to you not getting a race. You may well have the meanest looking race car on your trailer, but if you haven't got your tickets, you won't get in! Likewise, No Licence or Membership Card = **No Race**.

Make sure your Crash Helmet and Clothing is in good condition and has all the right labels to comply with the rules (see the RACMSA blue book that you get when you buy your licence).

You will also need Tools (A list of the basic tools you will require can be found in the Appendix section of this document), Petrol Cans (ideally with petrol in..... you wouldn't be the first!!) spare tyres etc. Write the list and check the stuff off before you go!

3 - Once You're At The Circuit!

Step 1 - Parking Up

Go to the part of the paddock allocated to the world's finest motor racing series and ask them where the Fiat Racing Challenge is. If in doubt, check out the part closest to the bar and you'll not go too far wrong. Better still - check the paddock plan that you binned a week ago! Try and find your self a bit of level concrete as opposed to a muddy bit of grass. You'll appreciate this when it belts down with rain and you're trying to work under your car. Once you've unloaded the "beast" it makes sense to secure your trailer. Sadly, it's not unusual for one or two to get nicked during the course of a season. Not a lot you can do about it when you're hammering round the track only to see you beloved trailer being hitched up to some dodgy Transit van!

Step 2 – Spare Time

Got loads of time to kill before you sign on? Why not walk around the track. It sounds a lot of effort but it will provide you with some very useful knowledge of the corners..... And it's an opportunity you only get as a 'racer' (it's also a touch more realistic than Toca 3). Better still; try to walk round with an experienced Fiat driver. Most of them will be willing to help whilst telling you what their favoured drink is and boring you with how their success in Formula 1 was dashed when they missed the last bus to Monaco.

Step 3 – Signing On

Time to sign on!! Walk over to the official's office and sign on. You'll need your licence and your BRSCC Membership Card. You'll be asked to sign a disclaimer and asked if you want your licence signed. Answer "Yes please" because you need the signatures to get that rookie cross off the back of your car, leave the aforementioned item with the official you signed on with. Then you'll be given your scrutineering ticket and a programme (At some meetings you'll get the programme once your through scrutineering i.e. Mallory, Donnington).

Step 4 – Scrutineering

Get your car and your safety clothing (Helmet and Racer Suit) and set off to scrutineering (remembering to take your scrutineering ticket which was given to you when you signed on!). It makes sense to ask an experienced driver to assist here until you get used to the routine. Remember that the scrutineer is there to look after your safety! Chances are he'll find something that he's unhappy about- i.e. loose battery or a hole in the fire wall, in which case a minor repair may be required. If you need help Ask! And ask quickly!! If you fail you will then need to go back to the Scrutineering bay to be re-checked after you rectify the problem. Once the Scrutineer is happy you'll get through at which point you will be given a sticker to confirm that he thinks your car is a work of art and/or legal. Stick it on the inside of the window/ roll cage immediately behind the drivers seat- i.e. so it can be clearly seen by the eagle eyed marshal who won't let you anywhere near the track if he can't see the sticker.

Step 5 – New Drivers Briefing

If you haven't raced at that specific circuit before, you'll have to attend a 'New Drivers Briefing', No show = No Race or guess what...Big fat cheque time!! You're going to have to attend at every meeting in your first season. Some circuits demand that all drivers attend, experienced or not (particularly if the circuit has changed in any way since our last meeting- i.e. if they've cut out a bit of the track)

Step 6 – Getting Ready For Qualifying

So, you've signed, you've attended all the meetings and pretty soon you're going to be ready to qualify. Get your self prepared in good time. Make a note of the location of the nearest toilet.... you'll need it in a moment. Speak to other drivers re tyre pressures, set ups etc. Ask them to have a quick look at your car- most of them have a pretty good idea as to what's right and wrong or will be able to suggest the best person to ask. It is a friendly series and drivers will be willing to help provided they aren't in the middle of a major rebuild or you expect them to assist you whilst you wander off for a coffee!! **REMEMBER TO PUT ENOUGH FUEL IN YOUR CAR** for an average session you will need 15 litres minimum.

Be ready to go to the collecting area at least 10 minutes before the designated time. Keep listening for paddock announcements or ask another competitor if you're not sure what's going on. Quite often the timetable is changed so don't decide to go 6 miles down the road for a spot of breakfast. You wouldn't be the first person to miss qualifying altogether because you were stuck in McDonalds!!

Step 7 – Qualifying

When requested, or when you see the other drivers set off, go to the holding area. **Make sure your pin is out of your fire extinguisher.** A few tips. Don't, until you are established as the man on the pace, be the first person out on the track. Chances are the bloke behind you, the chap who has been racing for 20 years, is not going to take too kindly to following you round in second gear whilst you remember to tighten up your seat belts and look for your friends who, being the sensible sort, remain in McDonalds blissfully unaware of your first on track experience.

Qualifying is to establish grid positions for the race and it is unlikely that you're going to set the fastest time. Also, it's qualifying- not racing! You have to complete 3 laps to be allowed to enter the race, it does not matter how slow these 3 laps are as long as you complete 3 laps, so use the first few laps to build up some confidence by gradually increasing your speed. Familiarise yourself with the track, braking points, marshals posts etc.

Keep a look out for faster cars. It is extremely unlikely that you will complete your first qualifying session without getting past/lapped at some point, these cars will be travelling a lot faster than you. They'll brake later and will probably make it look all very easy, do not be tempted to try and keep up with them, as they will have vastly more knowledge of a FIAT and that circuit than you and you will more than likely end up beached in a gravel trap or worse!! **Everyone** has been in the same situation and you'll get the respect and praise of other drivers if you act sensibly. They'll give you enough room but be aware, stay where you are when being overtaken rather than try to move out of the way and end up in a collision. Keep a look out for flags, spinning cars, your friends who have returned with your Big Mac etc.

Step 8 – Parc Ferme

Once you have completed qualifying follow the marshal's directions and go back to parc ferme where the scrutineer may want another look at your car. Now he's checking to see that it's legal- if it's not (and it should be cos the rules are pretty simple) you'll be disqualified and that's it.... unless of course you're just fined (big fat cheque time again) and put on the back of the grid with a time penalty. Common reasons for exclusion include being underweight. If you bought your car from a big fat bloke and you're thin and light, you'll need to add some weight. If you're exactly the right weight before qualifying, you'll be underweight afterwards- i.e. don't use fuel as ballast. If in doubt, weigh the car at the circuit before you qualify. Bear in mind that it's the weighbridge at the circuit that counts, not the one in your mates garage 200 miles away. Once you're through scrutineering, go back to your place in the paddock, swear a lot about how much fun/terror you've just had and then choose the right moment to apologise to any one you have inadvertently blocked in the session.

Meanwhile, Alan will get the results in and distribute them- it's all part of the service and there's no extra charge. Are we good to you or what? If you have got a problem with your car and you need help, ask. Don't think that we won't help - we will but we need to know you need assistance and we'll need time. Don't leave it till 5 minutes before the race.

Step 9 - Getting Ready For The Race

Once again, make sure you have got the car sorted and fuelled before you are called up for your moment of stardom. Be ready to go to the collecting area at least 10 minutes before the designated time. Keep listening for paddock announcements or ask another competitor if you're not sure what's going on.

Step 10 - The Race

You'll be sent to the collecting area and put in a dummy grid- i.e. you'll be told where to park, which will be in the position that you've qualified. After what seems like 4 weeks you'll be led out to the track and will then be stopped on the grid. Make a mental note of your position as then next thing is you'll get a green flag lap and will be asked to return to that position. When you get back you'll suddenly realise that it's all getting a bit serious. Once the grid is in place the lights will begin the start sequence, this means they will illuminate one/multiple red lights..... After a 2-6 second wait, the lights will go off and that's it YOU'RE OFF..... 24 Fiats are scrapping for the first corner- except those that forgot to select 1st gear and are thus revving their nuts off but going nowhere. There follows 15 minutes of chaos which we would prefer to describe as a race!!

Step 11 – Parc Ferme

Once the race is over follow the directions back to scrutineering or to the podium if you are so advised. Yeah right! Once you have cleared scrutineering it's time to listen to excuses, tales of bravery etc. as other drivers recount how they would have won but for whatever today's excuse happens to be. Applaud the victors, to include the winner of the Competition Transmission Services Rookie Trophy, (could be you) collect your results sheet from me and your licence if it's been signed.

Time to get ready to do it all again next time!!

4 - A Word From Our Glorious Leader

Whilst I would not normally offer any advice to drivers based on my lack of success, I shall make an exception this time as it allows me an opportunity to use even more clichés than normal.

Firstly.... if you want to finish first, first you've got to finish. Glib but true- you won't have any success if you break the land speed record on one section and your car on the next- it's all too easy to make a costly error in your first race which in some circumstances can finish your whole season there and then. No one expects you to win your first race. Many people enter the series assuming that they'll run top 6 straight away. You may- but the chances are that it'll take you some time to break into the top 16.

Next - you don't have to pass every car on the first lap, the race will be at least 10 laps long so take your time. It always looks so much better if you just grab first place 50 feet before the flag!!

Talking of flags- keep a look out for them- overtake on a yellow that you didn't see and you'll be off to the clerk of the course- in which case you'd best take that cheque book with you. If it seems that everyone else is suddenly going slow, chances are that they've seen a flag that you haven't.

Don't use other cars as a brake! This is not touring cars so our repair bills are not covered by manufacturers! If you go into a corner too fast you won't be thanked for punting the guy in front off. Look to see where other cars are braking but bear in mind that the drivers may be better at it than you so don't automatically assume that you can follow in an identical fashion.

If you're running last, look out for the race leader because the chances are he's likely to lap you! As will the bloke who's been trying to overtake him for 5 laps and looks upon your presence as the ideal opportunity to take that first spot. Let them through but let them worry about how they'll get past- Don't take off 3 cars in a failed attempt to get out of their way like you did in practice!!

Should you have a spin, **don't panic** but get back on track at the first safe opportunity. Watch the marshals for guidance. If on the other hand, it's a bit more serious and the marshal's tell you to abandon the car- do as they say. There's loads of races in a season so don't get despondent if for some reason you don't finish every time. If you really feel that someone has been unfair in the race, do not approach them with your jack handle immediately post race, come and see me and if necessary we can refer it to the clerk of the course. Chances are he'll be on to it anyway but please appreciate that occasionally, accidents will happen. And if they do, you can't present the bill to the culprit- it's all part of racing, which you'll recall is the best fun you're ever going to have. Should you feel really aggrieved and wish to make a protest, than follow the blue book rules but remember that you have to pay there and then. If you'd prefer to seek instant

retribution from your fellow competitor, then this isn't the ideal series for you and you may wish to re consider the basket weaving you dismissed as too exciting. However, if you're looking for good racing, fun and intend to avoid bankruptcy whilst you're at it, welcome along.

It's addictive and before you know it, you will be spending loads of money to knock 1/10th of a second off your lap times. You'll want to go testing every week and will invest in race instruction, wet tyres, dry tyres, buffed tyres. You'll want loads of electric gizmo's that confirm you're going even slower than last time, whatever, As long as you're having fun, we don't care. You'll find that there are in fact a number of drivers who really do know what they're doing so you can learn lots from them. Like wise they'll be others who can just about afford to race but are out for maximum fun, regardless of whether they win or not. They're all welcome and indeed essential to a successful championship.

The Fiat Racing Challenge celebrates its fourteenth anniversary in 2006 so is much better established than numerous other categories. What's more, the lap times a fair bit faster and yet we're still cheaper!

If you want more details or are gagging to sign up now, contact me, ignore any other details you have! - this where you can contact me:

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5 - Appendix A – List Of Tools Required

Basic Tools To Carry

- Jack
- 19/21mm Wheel Nut Brace
- 3/8 Socket Set
- Foot pump
- Tyre Pressure Gauge
- A Set of Mixed Crosshead/Flat nose Screwdrivers
- A set of Allan Keys
- A Torch
- Spark Plug Removal Socket
- 2 x 20 Litre Jerry Cans for Fuel
- Glass Cleaner
- Rain-X
- Spare Set of Brake Pads

Additional Kit Which May Be Useful If You Can Afford Them

- Additional Jack
- Torque Wrench
- Timing Light
- Compressor
- Battery Jump Pack
- Brake Cleaner
- Impact Wrench & Impact Sockets