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CHAPTER 01

Introduction

Welcome to *Prima's Essential Track Guide to Gran Turismo 5*. Featuring roughly 1,000 cars and 70 tracks, the game is Polyphony Digital's most ambitious undertaking to date. In addition to meticulously rendered production cars, many complete with a full-interior view, the game also features *GT* race cars, timeless classics, NASCAR stock cars, rally cars, concept vehicles, and even go-karts. Battle for the podium against eight computer-controlled opponents, or race with others online or in two-player split-screen mode. Can you conquer the grueling high-speed turns of the Nürburgring, or the perilous bends high atop the Alps? This comprehensive guide will give you the turn-by-turn tips you'll need to master every track. So get in the driver's seat, strap in your HANS device and get ready to hit the tarmac.

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How To Use This Guide

Before high-tailing it off the starting line, you must understand the basics of racing and familiarize yourself with every with the details of every track. *Gran Turismo 5* is a game of immense depth, and chances are you won't become a veteran racer overnight. Here's an overview of each chapter and how together they'll help you out in your journey to the checkered flag.

Essential Racing Jargon

Don't know what an off-camber, decreasing-radius turn is? Then get warmed up with the lingo so that you can quickly grasp the intricacies of all the tracks and know what's going on under the hood of your car. There may be a slight learning curve in the beginning, but you'll find a huge payoff when you're able to differentiate between understeer in a vehicle and a tail-whipping oversteer. . Read this section and you'll well on your to transform your ride from a trailer queen to a track king.

Racing 101

Knowing all the vernacular can only get you so far. Learn the fundamentals of how to approach corners and the main drivetrain layouts and why you would want to use each. *Gran Turismo 5* isn't just an arcade racer—it's a *simulation* game, so you won't get by with simply planting your foot on the gas pedal the entire race. Learn why braking is a good thing and the strategies to use in passing your opponents—the tricks the pros use in real life.

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Track Guide

The highlight and main feature of the *Essential Strategy Guide* is our comprehensive coverage of all the tracks. You'll not only get an overview of each individual layout, but also the nitty-gritty details of each track, down to the bumps and divots in the asphalt. Learn what types of cars are best to use for each track, and see the corners as you'd approach them in the game. Each track guide points out key turns and particularly challenging sections—you'll never be left wondering why opponents whiz by you at any given corner.

Index

The index provides a helpful list of words, phrases, and tracks you'll encounter while reading *Prima's Essential Track Guide to Gran Turismo 5* so you can cross reference them with relevant sections of the book.

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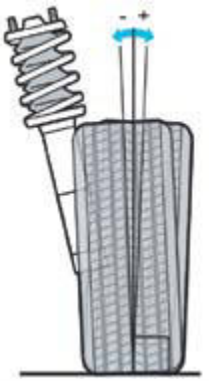
CHAPTER 02

Essential Racing Jargon

Before heading out of the pits to conquer the tracks, you'll need to familiarize yourself with the lingo. Don't know what an off-camber sweeper is, or a banked hairpin? Then save yourself countless race restarts and read on.

Camber

Camber refers to either the angle of the car's tire or the angle of the turn. Negative camber is when the tires are angled so that the bottom of the tire is tilted outward and the top is tucked inward. Negative camber is great for turning. Conversely, positive camber is when the tires are tilted so that they're narrower at the bottom, and wider up top. "Off-camber" refers to a turn that's angled to put positive camber to your tires, and is sloping against the turn instead of with it. Banked turns are angled with the turn, helping you carry speed through the bends. In short, positive/off-camber is bad, while negative camber is good on turns.



Brake Marker

Brake markers are visual reference points on the track that you'll use to time your braking. They can be anything from road signs to a curb, or even markings on pavement. It's better to rely on these than on the Driving Line's suggested braking point, because the Driving Line can be covered up by other cars. Plus, the Driving Line gives a pretty good approximation, but not always a precise or ideal braking point.

Racing Line

The racing line is the fastest path you can take down the track. In most cases, the game's Driving Line is a great tool to use for figuring out how to position yourself best on the straights and corners.

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Dropping Down to a Gear

Often in this guide, you'll see tips that direct you to drop to a specific gear for a turn. For example, "dropping down to third" means you'll brake to the point where your ideal RPM range will be in third gear. In other words, you can't simply drop to third gear without braking, or else your engine will be bouncing off the limiter without slowing down much. Also, when braking to a gear range, you should be downshifting to keep in the right RPMs.

Curbs

Curbs can be your best friend or worst enemy. In general, they're the painted, striped bands of concrete that you fnd on most road race courses. Not all curbs are created equal, though, and they come in a wide variety of shapes, angles and sizes. Here are the ones you'll frequently encounter.

Outside Curb

Curbs on the outside are typically helpful and prevent you from running off the road. They're usually at a slight angle to help you get back on the road, too. You'll make frequent use of these, and on some tracks, such as the last turn on Tsukuba, you may even rely on them.

Inside Curb

Inside curbs either help you to create a tighter turn by allowing you to clip them, or force you to keep to the roads more by being more angled. The former are great, especially for tight, narrow turns such as the last leg in Madrid. In many instances, the Driving Line suggests you even go over them. Since they're relatively flat, they essentially widen the amount of road you can use.

The other type of inside curb are extremely angled off-camber curbs, which should be avoided like the plague—they can really disrupt the balance of your car if you hit them. If the curbs look anything like the one in this screenshot, get close to them, but don't clip them.

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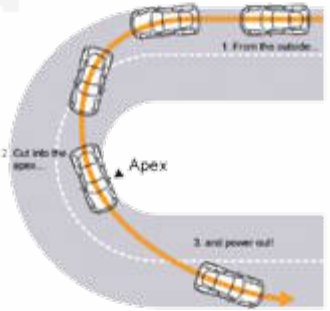
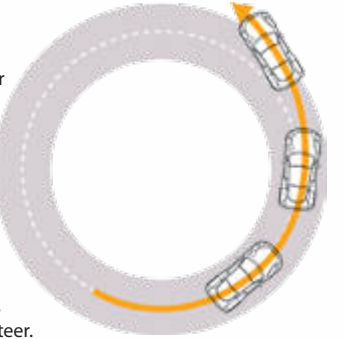
Apex



The apex is the point on your racing line where your car is closest to the inside edge of the track on a turn. It's also typically the tightest part of the turn. Also known as the clipping point, sometimes the apex is at the center of the turn, and a lot of times, much later in the turn. Why not drive in the middle of the road as opposed to clipping the inside? Because the apex enables you to take the turn straighter/ and or quicker out of the corner. You'll have to know the apex on each turn in the track to optimize your track times.

Handling Characteristics

Understeer



Handling characteristics of a car can be split into roughly three categories: understeer, neutral, and oversteer. These traits can occur at any point in the turn—the entry, mid-corner, or on exit—and for different reasons. Understeering gives the sensation that the car is "pushing" or resisting the turn—that instead of the tail coming around with the turn, it's wanting to plow straight ahead into the wall.

But to somebody just starting out, it can be hard to distinguish why your car isn't turning quickly enough. Is it really understeering, or are you simply taking a turn too fast? If you're wanting to avoid hitting the brakes on a turn, it's likely the latter. As you drive more cars, you'll start grasping that stiff feeling of understeer. Inexpensive FWD cars come with understeer dialed in right out of the factory, so you can use that as a reference point.

Too much understeer is always a bad thing, and when tuning or choosing a car, you want to pick up one that's closer to neutral. Some drivers like a tad of understeer at the limit, because it makes the car easier to drive and more forgiving at breakneck speeds. If your car is understeering, in general, letting off the gas pedal will "tuck" the nose back in.

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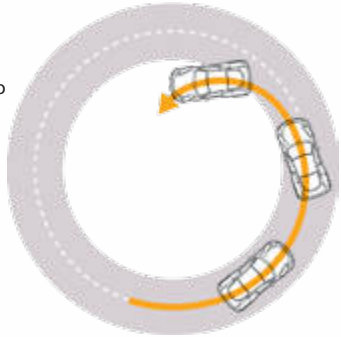
Oversteer

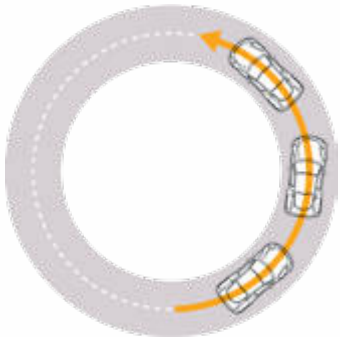


Oversteer is the opposite of understeer, and unlike understeer, most racers find a little bit of oversteer desirable, even ideal. Fortunately oversteering is a lot easier to notice—but harder to reign in. Oversteering gives the sensation that the car is turning too much without actually following along the road.

Unlike the stiffness you feel in understeer, with oversteer the car feels loose. That responsive trait is why many like a bit of oversteer. Too much oversteer, however, and the car becomes unwieldy in turns, and you're spending all of your time trying to counteract the tail rotating. Drifting is a sport that embraces gobs of oversteer—drifters try to maintain extreme angles while staying in control.

Countering oversteer can be done in many ways. As a general rule, never let off the gas pedal completely (especially in a RWD car) when you're oversteering—that induces lift-off oversteer, which makes things even worse. Instead, point the steering wheel slightly in the opposite direction you're turning and apply some throttle, which is called countersteering. Especially when turning off *Gran Turismo 5*'s Skid Recovery Force, you'll need delicate touches to countersteer. If you throw the steering hard to the other direction and floor the gas pedal, that may cause the car to "fishtail," where you car rocks back and forth (usually before spinning out).

Neutral (Handling)



In contrast to oversteer and understeer, a car is said to be neutral if it's perfectly balanced, neither understeering nor oversteering. It is impossible for any car to be absolutely neutral in all conditions. Depending on road conditions, drivetrain layout, and horsepower, the car will exhibit different characteristics in different situations.

Types of Turns

It doesn't take an expert to figure out how to tackle a straight—well, at least until you get 1000-horsepower drag racers with chassis-twisting torque. What separates the beginners from the pros is knowing how to manage the corners. The general principle is you slow down before turning, turn while letting off the gas, then accelerate out. Here are the basic types of turns. Some curves are a combination of these types.

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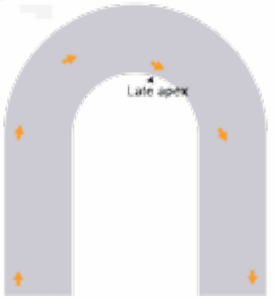
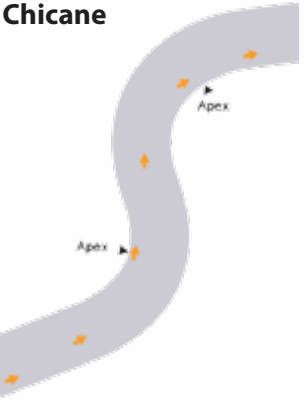
Hairpin



Hairpin turns are the tightest and slowest of all turns, typically curving 180 degrees so that you car is going back in the direction you started from. Hairpins usually force you to stay in first and second gear. But you're thinking, "why should I buy a fast super-exotic only to go slow?" Since even Michael Schumacher has to drop down in speed to take hairpins, you will too.

Chicane



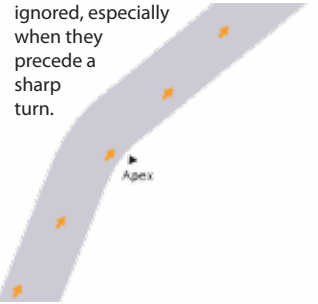
Chicanes are the killjoys of a track—in other words, they're made to slow you down. They come in shapes of either swoopy *S*'s, or as hard-angled zigzags, some of which are called "bus-stop chicanes." You never actually want to follow the curve pattern of a chicane, but rather cut the corners as much you can.

Sweeper

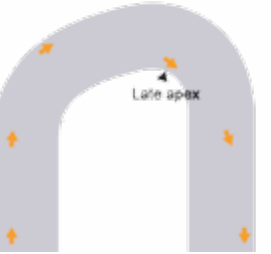
Sweepers are soft-angled turns that can be much longer than chicanes or hairpins. They can be challenging to master, especially if you haven't mastered modulating the throttle with a game controller. Constant-radius turns keep the same shape throughout; some turns tighten or get easier mid-corner, and that changes the apex.

Kink

Kinks are just minor turns that require little adjustment. But they're not to be ignored, especially when they precede a sharp turn.



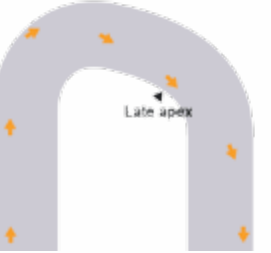
Decreasing-Radius Turn



Decreasing-radius turns start out with a gentler curve, then get progressively tighter. As a result, you'll come into the corner at higher speeds than when you exit.

Increasing-Radius Turn

Increasing-radius turns start out as tight turns, but get easier and faster to navigate as you proceed through the curve.



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CHAPTER 03

Racing 101

Learning each track takes time. Even if we fancy ourselves to be the next Fernando Alonso, the reality is that even professional drivers have to run countless laps around the course to master all the turns and challenges. When starting out on a new course, you'll find it takes patience and dedication to get comfortable with each track. Don't lose heart if you're getting thrashed on the corners or overtaken by opponents.

Embrace the Brake Pedal

The most important rule of driving simulation—especially if you've only played more casual driving games—is that you'll need to let off the gas, brake, turn, then hit the gas—on pretty much every single track. The habit of lead-footing through all the turns can be a hard one to break because you may get the sense that you're going slower. Use the brakes and learn to love it—after all, those Formula One cars don't have giant ceramic brakes just for show.

Break the Habit of Turning and Braking

Turning comes at the expense of braking/accelerating, and vice versa. Tire traction is a finite resource that's split into braking, turning, and accelerating. You can't brake at 100 percent and turn at 100 percent. If the tires are spending all of their grip on braking, then they can do little to no turning. The same goes for turning and accelerating. So if you try to brake hard and turn at the same time, you'll be overworking the tires in most situations.

Occasionally, you'll have turns where you can just cut the steering hard and mash the gas pedal to the floor, but don't expect to do that on every corner.

General Rules for Turning

The bulk of the braking will be done in a straight line, right before entering the corner. When you turn into the bend, let off the brakes while turning progressively harder. Mid-corner you'll be turning without any braking or accelerating. Coming out of the corner you'll gradually hit the gas while unwinding the steering wheel.

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Braking/Accelerating Isn't an "On/Off" Ordeal

Especially when mapping acceleration and braking to controller buttons, it can be easy to think of accelerating as being either on or off. For smoother driving, you'll need to get used to the notion of partial throttle or partial braking. Especially with high-powered mid-engine cars, simply flooring it out of the corner could cause the car to spin out. Therefore map the accelerating and braking to keys where you can comfortably modulate the amount of throttle or brakes. The right analog stick, or the L2 and R2 buttons would be a great options for being able to fine-tune your acceleration and braking. The L2 and R2 buttons are great because they allow you to brake and hit the gas at the same time—a method drivers use to keep the RPMs up while braking.

The Driving Line Is a Guide, Not the Be-All and End-All

Racing lines are extremely helpful for knowing the best line to take, but not necessarily for knowing the details of when and how to brake or apply the gas pedal. You may find that you can brake a bit later than the red band suggests. When learning the ropes of the course, it's good to follow the Driving Line, but don't be afraid to experiment and find little tricks and nuances of your own once you get used to the track.

External/Internal View

Although the cockpit view is the most immersive and exciting view, it is also visually the most obstructive. The A pillars and the dash can make it hard to see the Driving Line, as well as get a feeling for the dimensions of the car. In low-riding race cars, the view is even more obscured. That said, how good or bad the cockpit view is depends on the car; with some rides like the Audi R8, the cockpit view is very livable, even cozy.

Note the difference between the two views. The one on the left has considerably more cramped visibility.

The behind-the-car view is a popular choice for those who enjoy admiring the outside of their ride (after all, what's the use if you can't admire how it looks?)—but isn't ideal for driving—unlike the other views, the from-the-back perspective has a camera that's not locked onto the car. When turning, the camera won't completely turn with the car. This makes it harder to gauge the nose of your car, and consequently what the car is exactly doing.

The best view for driving is the over-the-hood view. Not only does it provide an unobstructed view of the road ahead, but it also tends to be from a higher vantage point than the driver's perspective, which allows you to see farther ahead on the road. Sure, it may be "cheating" from a realism standpoint, but when going up those blind crests, you'll learn to love it.

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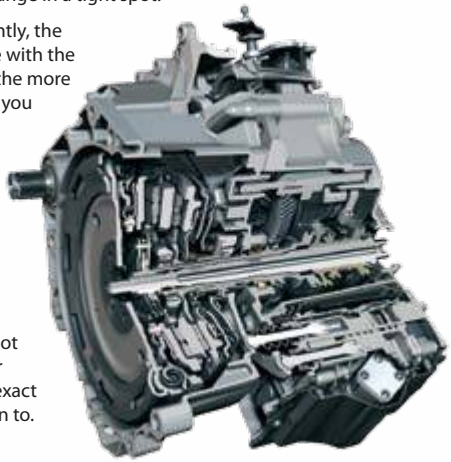
Manual vs. Automatic Transmission

Manually rowing through the gears may seem needlessly cumbersome, but there's more to it than just bragging to friends about how you're hardcore enough to drive a standard. It not only allows for more control of you car, but also gives you a better understanding of your speed. Automatics can shift when you don't want to shift, dropping you out of your desired RPM range in a tight spot.

More importantly, the more you're in tune with the transmission gear, the more you know how fast you should be going because the gears themselves become speed references. A hairpin turn, for example, typically has you drop down to second gear to navigate—that's a lot easier to remember than knowing the exact speed to drop down to.



Manual Shifting

A huge aspect to driving a manual successfully is keeping your car in the optimal gear. In general, you'll want your RPMs to be in the mid to upper range. Typically, anything above 4000 RPM is desirable. Naturally aspirated cars (those without turbos or superchargers) can be very picky about their RPM range, and tend to favor staying in the stratospheric range of 6000 to 8000 RPM.

In addition to downshifting, it's important to know when to upshift to a higher gear. And for that there are two things you need to know about RPM and your tachometer (the gauge indicating RPM): the redline and the rev limiter. The redline is the red area on your tachometer. The rev limiter is the point where the car is physically prevented from its RPMs from climbing any higher.

What you need to worry about is the rev limiter. It's usually better to shift at the rev limiter rather than the redline, because that will typically bring you to better RPM range in the next gear.

Be aware of sudden changes in load: Load is how the weight shifts around while driving your car. Whether turning, braking or hitting the gas, the weight shifts constantly as you're driving, impacting the car's stability as well as the traction limits. If you slam the brakes in the middle of a corner, that can be enough to lighten the tail of your car, sending it spinning out of control.

Suspension Tuning—There Is No "Best" Setup

Don't entirely rely upon what others think of cars. The best car is for you is in part subjective. For example, some people prefer their ride to "push" (understeer) slightly at the limit; others prefer the car to be more loose and slightly oversteer. Still others prefer a more tail-happy car. The best for car for you is the one where you're the most comfortable pushing it to its very limits. The same applies to suspension and chassis tuning.

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The Art of Passing

There are two main situations where you can pass: on a straight and at the start of a turn. Straightaway passing is simple: Mash the throttle, follow behind, hope you have enough speed to take the other car on. Passing while turning, however, requires a lot more technique and timing. In general, you want to pass from the outside of the lane to the inside as you're both approaching the apex.

First, set up your attack by going from the outside in. Be sure your nose is tucked into the lane, so the person can't just cut you off (if they do and hit your car with their rear bumper, they'll spin out). Once you're inside, maintain the best line you can, making sure you don't just slam the gas and drift to the outside. Because the car on the outside has more distance to travel, it is at a disadvantage. By the end of the turn, you'll be able to push ahead of your opponent, taking the lead.

ABS, Traction Control, and Other Technological Aids

The generation of analog drivers may gnash their teeth at the thought of using any technology to help them out, but with the advances in computer engineering, sometimes the computer does know what's best—and, in some cases not. ABS, for example, relies on a sensor that detects the rate of deceleration. If the deceleration passes a certain g-force threshold, ABS kicks in. If the rate of deceleration where ABS kicks in is less than the rate of deceleration that the tires can handle, then ABS is hurting braking distance. That said, in wet conditions ABS is still advantageous, and those who are starting out probably just want to keep this on.

TRACTION CONTROL SYSTEMS (TCS)

The Traction Control System can come in handy, especially when launching with a high-horsepower car. If the engine delivers more power than what the tires can handle, the tires will spin without grabbing the road. TCS limits power to the wheels so that the tires won't be spinning in place. In general, having a bit of TCS can be beneficial, although in certain situations such as drifting, you'll want the tires to lose traction. Avoid having your TCS settings too high, or else you'll slow down. Set it to 2 or 3 at most.

ASSISTED STABILITY MANAGEMENT (ASM)

ASM, on the other hand, will generally slow your car down at the curves in return for better stability. It clamps down on understeer and oversteer by applying the brake. Hence, with ASM on, you'll often find your car automatically slowing down so that it can gain control. Unless the car is absolutely unwieldy around corners, keep ASM off or at very low settings.

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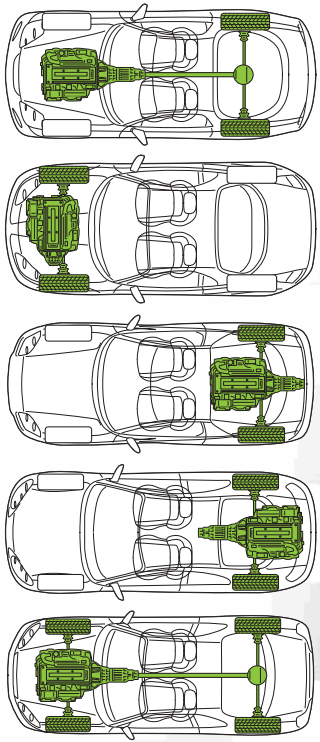
Front-Wheel Drive vs. Rear-Wheel Drive vs. All-Wheel Drive



Depending on the situation, one drivetrain tends to become advantageous over another. Front-wheel drive (FWD), which has the power going to the front wheels, is useful for being a small, lighter package. That could give enough of an edge against heavier all-wheel drive (AWD) or real-wheel drive (RWD) cars in the lower horsepower segment.

There are several downsides to a FWD car. One is that they tend to be nose-heavy, and have a more uneven weight distribution. Also, although typically more stable in turns, they FWD cars tend to understeer, especially when hitting the throttle in a corner. There are ways to counter this when tuning your car, such as adding a small amount of toe-out to the rear (which points the rear wheels out), or increasing front camber relative to the rear.

But one of the biggest downsides to FWD is that as you get higher horsepower, you'll get torque steer—a phenomenon where your steering wheel wants to jerk in the direction you're turning. It can be unwieldy to control, so when approaching power upwards of 250 to 300 horsepower, you'll want to look toward RWD or AWD. Front-wheel drive cars are almost always front-engine as well (called FF for short).

RWD is the most popular drivetrain layout for racing, and almost all major racing cars use some form of RWD. Weight distribution in a mid-engine or front-engine rear-wheel drive (MR or FR) tends to be more even than a front-engine, front-wheel drive (FF). With a FWD car, the front wheels are doing the bulk of the braking (since brakes shift the weight frontward), all the turning, and at the same time putting the power to the road. RWD distributes the work more evenly by putting all the power to the rear. The major downside to RWD is that with higher horsepower, the gobs of engine torque to the rear can make it tricky to keep the tail from sliding. That can be countered by a variety of methods, such as tire pressure, suspension damping, sway bars, and altering the differentials.

Often the most forgiving drivetrain layout is AWD. Since power is going to all four wheels, and since the torque distribution can be altered in many AWD cars, you tend to have more stability in AWD. So although a high-end FR can make blistering lap times, you'll probably pull off a similar time in a similarly specced AWD with a lot less effort. The biggest downside, however, is that AWD weighs a lot more. So especially in lower-horsepower cars, the extra pounds can be a significant disadvantage. When the difference between you and another car is measured in tenths of a second, every pound and ounce counts.

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CHAPTER 04

Tracks

With as assortment of famous high-speed circuits; compact, urban road courses; and grandiose scenic rally courses, Gran Turismo 5 has the largest selection of tracks in the series to date—and we're here to cover all of them.

Autodromo Nazionale Monza

A popular Italian Formula One track, this challenging, high-speed track keeps cars in their upper RPM range. With 3.6 miles of tarmac, most of it taken at full-throttle, the bulk of the time you spend braking will be for chicanes.

Tracks:

Autodromo Nazionale Monza
Autodromo Nazionale Monza (No Chicane)

Autumn Ring

A fictional track carried over from the original *Gran Turismo*, this 1.8-mile or 0.8-mile course is marked by a series of angular turns in close succession. In contrast to other short courses such as Tsukuba, Autumn Ring has quite a bit of inclines and declines.

Tracks:

Autumn Ring
Autumn Ring (Reverse)
Autumn Ring Mini
Autumn Ring Mini (Reverse)

Cape Ring

A new addition to the series, Cape Ring is a high-altitude course that's full of tight bends and broad sweepers. It stands out because of its perfectly circular section that has racers spiral up the track. At 4.4 miles for the full circuit, it's also one of the longer original tracks in the game.

Tracks:

Cape Ring North
Cape Ring South
Cape Ring Outside
Cape Ring
Cape Ring Inside

Chamonix

Nestled high in the mountains of southeast France is Chamonix, a challenging snow course characterized by windy chicanes and steep elevation changes. Four tracks are offered, with the main track spanning a whopping 5.1 miles.

Tracks:

Chamonix Mini
Chamonix East
Chamonix West
Chamonix Main

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Circuit de la Sarthe

Most famous for the 24 hours of Le Mans, this 8.5-mile course has tested the mettle of race drivers since 1923. With its emphasis on high speeds and intense, rotor-glowing braking, this track tests cars to their very limits, both in endurance and in performance.

Tracks:

Circuit de la Sarthe 2009
Circuit de la Sarthe 2009 No Chicane
Circuit de la Sarthe 2005
Circuit de la Sarthe 2005 No Chicane

Circuito de Madrid

Snaking through the capital of Spain is Circuito de Madrid, a 2.1-mile course consisting of chicanes, a hairpin, and moderate-speed turns. The shorter mini course is more basic; its 1.3 miles lack the complex chicanes.

Tracks:

Circuito de Madrid
Circuito de Madrid (Reverse)
Circuito de Madrid Mini
Circuito de Madrid Mini (Reverse)

Clubman/Special Stage Route 5 & 7

Test your high-speed mettle in one of the iconic *Gran Turismo* locales. The stages feature similar aesthetics, inspired by of Tokyo's Bayshore Route (or Shutokosoku Wangansen, in Japanese). Whether you're driving the shorter Clubman course or the long Special Stage Route 7, each track emphasizes speed.

Tracks:

Clubman Stage Route 5
Special Stage Route 5
Special Stage Route 5 (Reverse)
Special Stage Route 7

Côte d'Azur

Arguably one of the most well-known real-world tracks, the Côte d'Azur course is laid down within the actual streets of Monaco, snaking through the streets of Monte Carlo and La Condamine. It's especially known for its tight corners, many of which will slow racers down to a crawl.

Track:

Côte d'Azur

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Daytona International Speedway

Home to the biggest NASCAR event, the Daytona 500, this famous stock-car track has racers drive around a 2.5-mile oval course. The track also offers a 3.6-mile road course for those who also want to occasionally turn right.

Tracks:

Daytona International Speedway
Daytona Road Course

Deep Forest Raceway

A longtime favorite throughout the Gran Turismo series, this winding track is known for its blind and tight bends leading into a pair of tunnels, which sending many a neophyte racer crashing into the outside railing.

Tracks:

Deep Forest Raceway
Deep Forest Raceway (Reverse)

Eiger Nordwand

Nestled in the scenic Bernese Alps in Switzerland, this high-altitude course is the most challenging dirt track that the game has to offer. The 4.5 miles of gravel and tarmac may not seem that long on paper, but with the course's slow, perilous bends, you'll quickly realize that it's a monster to tackle.

Tracks:

Eiger Nordwand Short Track
Eiger Nordwand Short Track (Reverse)
Eiger Nordwand W Trail
Eiger Nordwand K Trail
Eiger Nordwand G Trail
Eiger Nordwand W Trail (Reverse)
Eiger Nordwand K Trail (Reverse)
Eiger Nordwand G Trail (Reverse)

Fuji International Speedway

Located in the foothills of Mount Fuji in the Shizuoka prefecture of Japan, Fuji Speedway is known for its long straightaway that runs nearly a mile. The track underwent renovations in 2004—meaning the track is slightly different from previous *Gran Turismo* games.

Tracks:

Fuji Speedway F
Fuji Speedway GT

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Grand Valley Speedway

Yet another *Gran Turismo 1* classic, this balanced locale has a mix of long straights, tight hairpins, S-curves, angular turns, and sweepers that make it a challenging course for even the most seasoned veteran. The east section is more beginner-friendly, and doesn't have the two hairpins.

Tracks:

Grand Valley East
Grand Valley East (Reverse)
Grand Valley Speedway
Grand Valley Speedway (Reverse)

High Speed Ring

With its gentle sweeping corners, freeway-like road width and a long home straight, this is a great beginner's course that lets novices grasp the fundamentals of racing—without the experiences of race-ending barrier crashes or untimely plunges into gravel pits.

Tracks:

High Speed Ring
High Speed Ring (Reverse)

Indianapolis Motor Speedway

Founded in 1909, this iconic American track hosts NASCAR as well as the Indianapolis 500. In addition to the squarish oval course used by NASCAR, the speedway also has a road-racing track that has been used by venues such as Formula One.

Tracks:

Superspeedway—Indy
Superspeedway—Road Course

London

Taking place in the midst of the hustle and bustle of the capitol of England, this small course is less about the speed of your ride and more about its agility. At a scant 1.19 miles in length, this tight course is full of blind turns and kinks.

Tracks:

London
London (Reverse)

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Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca

Spawned from the love of public road racing in the Del Monte forest, Laguna Seca was created in 1957. Initially 1.9 miles, the track now has 11 turns with a track length of 2.2 miles. With a world-renowned S-curve, Laguna Seca is a popular track for a multitude of racing venues.

Track:

Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca

Nürburgring

Most famous for its "Green Hell," the Nürburgring has the most challenging courses the motorsports world has to offer. At a grueling 13 miles, the northern loop (Nordschleife) takes considerable practice to memorize the course. The Nürburgring GP was later created for use in Formula One, after Nordschleife was deemed too dangerous due its lack of runoff space.

Tracks:

Nürburgring Nordschleife
Nürburgring 24H
Nürburgring GP/F
Nürburgring GP/D
Nürburgring Type V

Rome

This fictional course cuts through the heart of Rome, and is based on the Via dei Fori Imperiali, an actual road in the city. Iconic architectural sights adorn the environment, with buildings such as the Colosseum and the Piazza Venezia peeking out from the background.

Tracks:

Rome
Rome (Reverse)

Suzuka Circuit

One of the most renowned courses in Japan, Suzuka International Racing Course was created in 1962 as a test bed for Honda vehicles. Notable for its series of S-curves and the track's overall figure-eight shape, the track has everything from chicanes to long straights to hairpins.

Tracks:

Suzuka Circuit
Suzuka Circuit East

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Toscana

Set in the rolling, rustic hills of Italy, this rally course spans 2.1 miles and has players sliding through relatively narrow dirt roads. Aside from one relatively straight section, it's filled with climbs, dips, and bends that will test the mettle of even the most seasoned drivers.

Tracks:

Toscana
Toscana (Reverse)

The Top Gear Test Track

Popularized by the BBC car-enthusiast show "Top Gear" and its tame racing driver "Stig," the iconic Top Gear track is a converted airbase designed to rigorously put an automobile's handling dynamics to the test.

Track:

The Top Gear Test Track

Trial Mountain

One of the few courses to be featured in all the major *Gran Turismo* installments (*1* through *4*), Trial Mountain is a twisty track characterized by its blind turns through craggy mountains and scenic paths carved through lush, green forests.

Tracks:

Trial Mountain
Trial Mountain (Reverse)

Tokyo R246

A fictional track based on the route 246 highway in Japan, the track features chicanes, high-speed curves, and hairpins. With a final straightaway covering two-thirds of a mile and the lack of sharp-angled curves, the track favors fast-accelerating cars.

Tracks:

Tokyo R246
Tokyo R246 (Reverse)

Tsukuba Circuit

Tsukuba Circuit is a relatively small and tight course that is ideal for testing and optimizing your suspension setup. Mixed with the hairpins and tight turns is a back straightaway, which is perfect for overtaking cars on the relatively narrow track.

Track:

Tsukuba Circuit

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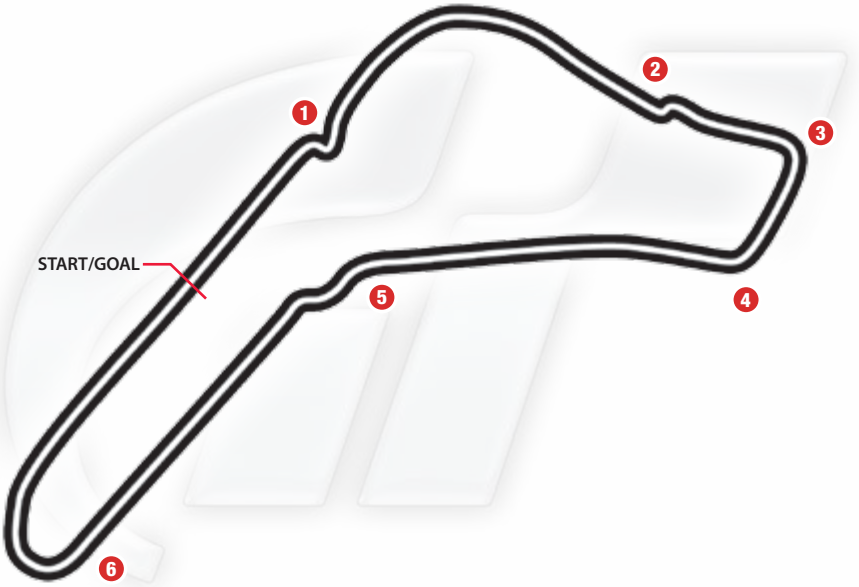
Autodromo Nazionale Monza

Tuning Guide: Monza has some gradual inclines and declines but is overall very flat, so you can keep your car relatively low. Avoid lots of negative camber since the bulk of the track focuses on straight-line acceleration. Downforce will help with high-speed stability.

Recommended Car: High-powered RWD or AWD.



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Turn 1: Right at the outset you'll encounter a speed-bleeding chicane. If you're coming off the home stretch from a previous lap, this will make you slow down considerably. The braking point will typically be past the 200 marker. Stay on the outside, and brake while going straight. After dropping off enough speed, cut in to the right, riding over the striped curb. Cut back quickly to the left, and don't apply much if any throttle here—the narrow track means there's not much room to run off.

Since the tips of the chicane are covered, you can cut corners fairly aggressively here, and that's especially advantageous if it becomes a crowded corner. To come out of the last bend on the inside, you might need to brake late and stay on the outside for the initial right-hander. Although the path is initially longer, you'll be blocking the others who took the inside on the right-hander from getting inside on the left-hander—thus allowing you to power out sooner than the others.

From here, go straight across, clipping the curbs on both turns. For the right-hander, your car will be completely off the road.

Turn 2: Beyond a gentle sweeper you'll encounter another chicane and this one is a cheater's paradise. The exiting path is slightly offset to the left, and you'll have to drop your speed slightly if you want to cut across the grass (but not nearly as much as if you were to legitimately take the turn). Drop down to fourth or fifth gear, and without applying throttle, cut across without bothering with the chicane. Although in real life this would incur serious penalties, in this game you're gunning for the podium—no matter what it takes.

When clearing the grass and getting back on asphalt, watch out for the solid wall on the right side. If you're late on turning or going too fast, you can slam into it hard. Due to the shape of the chicane, it can be easy to spin out if you're making extreme corrections on the grass. Try making the bulk of the steering corrections while your wheels are on solid tarmac. In the grass, only make light steering adjustments. If it's done right, you should be able to take this at between 100 to 120 mph—nearly double the speed if you were to actually use the chicane.

For the virtuous track junkie who refuses to break rules, you'll brake considerably more than the unabashed cheaters. In principle it's same as the first chicane. Drop down to second gear from the outside of the track and cut in across the curb. Cut back again to the right, running over the second curb. Once you reach the second curb you can immediately hit the gas. Even if you don't want to cut across the grass, there are still ways to cut the chicane shorter.

Turn 3: This right-handed sweeper doesn't require much braking, but if you're lazy on the turn you'll quickly run aground. The game's Driving Line may suggest braking while turning, but the tires should be mainly braking, with only slight steering input—if you're trying to brake and steer hard at the same time, you'll do neither well. From the outside of the turn, cut in first before hitting the brakes hard. While slamming the brakes, you should be moving the steering to the right only slightly, so that the nose of car eventually points to the inside curb of the turn. Keep braking until you drop down two gears, and by this point you should be on the inside of the bend. Let off the brakes and start turning hard. The corner is a little longer than you might expect, and hence the apex is relatively late. If you start powering out at the middle of the turn, you'll go wide and drift quickly to the outside. There's some runoff space here, but because of the relatively narrow track you'll have to wait on the gas until you're roughly two-thirds of the way through the corner.

TIP: Look ahead of the track—anticipate what's ahead by looking at the minimap on the upper-left corner of the screen.

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The trick is hitting the gas early. Hit it before crossing the apex.

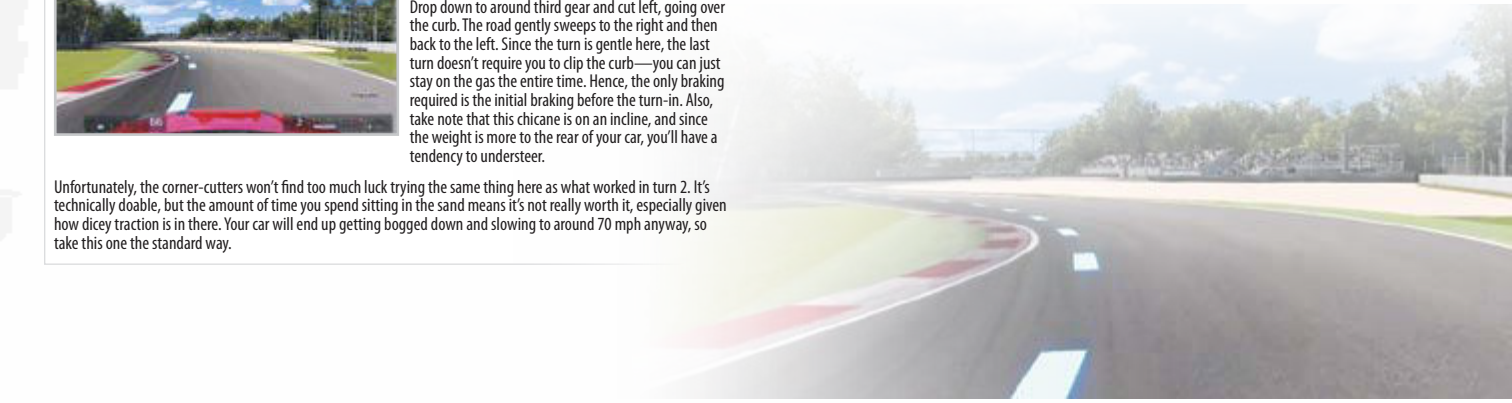
Turn 4: Due to the slight decline and incline on this turn, it's banked and can be taken faster than the previous corner, even if it doesn't look like it at first glance. Brake to third, cut in, and quickly hit the gas when you're pointed in the right direction—even before you clip the apex. It's easy to undershoot this turn, especially coming from the last turn. If you're powering out and find plenty of room to the left as the road straightens out, you've hit the gas too late.

Turn 5: A chicane that requires a fair amount of braking, these turns make up more of a traditionally shaped S-curve than the mini-map would suggest. Drop down to around third gear and cut left, going over the curb. The road gently sweeps to the right and then back to the left. Since the turn is gentle here, the last turn doesn't require you to clip the curb—you can just stay on the gas the entire time. Hence, the only braking required is the initial braking before the turn-in. Also, take note that this chicane is on an incline, and since the weight is more to the rear of your car, you'll have a tendency to understeer.

Unfortunately, the corner-cutters won't find too much luck trying the same thing here as what worked in turn 2. It's technically doable, but the amount of time you spend sitting in the sand means it's not really worth it, especially given how dicey traction is in there. Your car will end up getting bogged down and slowing to around 70 mph anyway, so take this one the standard way.

If the Driving Line's telling you to brake hard and turn as it is, you've probably started braking too late.

Turn 6: The last turn is a hard one to execute perfectly, especially since you're coming into it at higher speeds. The braking point will be around the 100 mark for faster cars. The best way to tackle this turn is brake in two steps. First, drop down to fourth gear from the outside lane while still going straight. Second, cut in, and immediately brake down to third. As mentioned earlier, don't steer at the same time as braking or else your tires will get overwhelmed. Once you're in third, quickly cut the steering wheel so that you're hugging the inside. The curb is off camber here, so you don't want to touch it. The first third of the turn is tight, whereas the remaining portion gets more lax—so you'll be able to power through with the throttle on full after clearing the initial apex.



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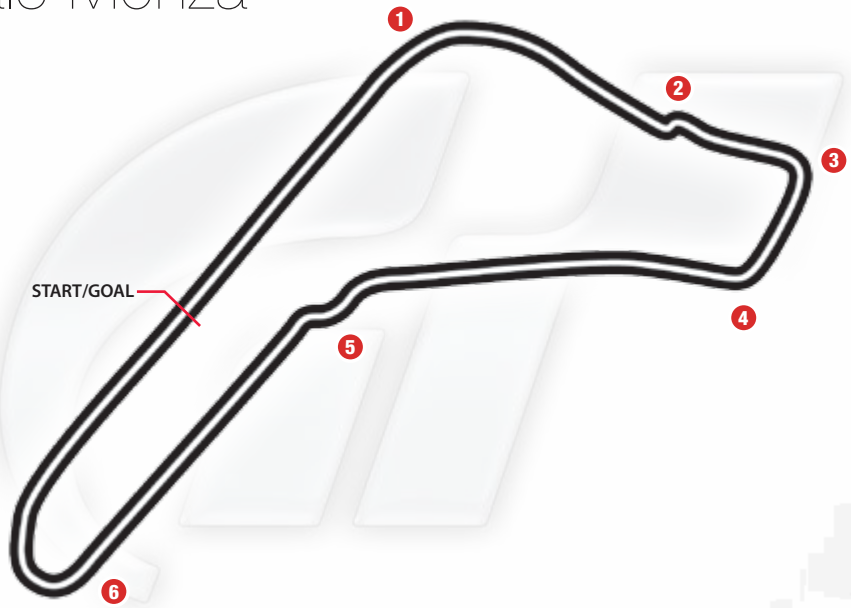
Autodromo Nazionale Monza (No Chicane)

Tuning Guide: Aside from the absence of the first chicane, this track is identical to the regular Autodromo Nazionale Monza. That said, because the straightaway is a lot longer without the chicane, you may need to tweak your gearing to ensure that you don't bounce off the limiter. In addition, downforce is very helpful since you're carrying so much speed.

Recommended car: Any RWD or AWD car with plenty of top-end speed and downforce.



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Turn 1: Give yourself some room to brake here, if you think you can just let off the throttle you might plow into the sand pit.

This sweeper may not look like much, but since you've tacked on a lot of speed here (over 160 mph for high-end exotics), you'll probably need to slow down to take it on. It won't require you to drop down a gear, but some moderate braking will help you stay on the inside of the long bend.

Turn 2: This corner is the same as the regular track, but you might have gained some additional speed going in. Drop down to about 120 mph before throwing yourself into the grass. Avoid doing this only if you're doing Time Attack, as you will get penalized. But if you're trying to beat others, then charge into the neatly kept lawn with reckless aplomb.

Turns 3–6: Since the rest of the turns will be identical to the regular Monza, refer to the Autodromo Nazionale Monza track guide with chicanes.

SUSPENSION TUNING: DOWNFORCE

As the name suggests, downforce is the force that pushes down upon your car. The opposite of downforce is lift, and lift is always a bad thing—you want your car planted to the ground as much as possible.

There are two ways of generating downforce: The first is by having aero components physically pushing the car down with wind resistance. This creates downforce at the cost of drag, and eventually too much drag can slow you down. Nonetheless, the benefits outweigh the negatives when you're going consistently at speeds over 60 mph. The second way of generating downforce is by reducing drag, especially underneath and behind the car. Two of the ways this is done is by straightening the air flow (such as by means of a diffuser), and/or quickening the air flow.

In the game you're able to increase downforce to the front as well as the rear. The amount of downforce relative to the nose and the tail of the car produces different handling characteristics. Lots of rear downforce encourages understeer, whereas more up front encourages oversteer. Since the amount of downforce generated is dependent upon speed, for smaller courses downforce is probably not worth tweaking.

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Autumn Ring Mini Forward

Tuning Guide: Since you'll be hanging around in second gear a lot, you may want to make this gear slightly taller so that you have more speed to work with in the RPM range. Due to the course's short length, the highest gear you'll probably hit is fourth. That said, simply changing the final gear means your second gear will become much shorter, so you'll want to pay special attention to third and second gear.

Recommended Car: Any lightweight and nimble car: FF or FR work well here.

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Turn 1: The first corner is the tightest in the course and it will have you dramatically slow down. The ideal speed when rounding the corner will be somewhere in the 40 mph range, and possibly even a little lower. Although it's tempting to go around the outside edge at a quicker speed, staying close to the inside and then powering out two-thirds of the way out of the turn will be much, much faster.

Turn 2: Past the initial sharp bend, you'll drop a hill and encounter a mild, sweeping left-hander. Hit the brakes till you get to second gear—use the curb on the right side as your reference point, since it starts from where you'll need to brake. Cut in early so that you clip the apex, then power out. Also, keep in mind that you'll primarily stay in second gear on this track. Even if a corner is approaching and you can shift to third, stay in second. In addition, since a right-hander immediately follows this corner, you do not want drift to the right side when powering out. Let off the gas if you're getting toward the right side of the road, and start moving back to the middle for the next turn.

Turn 3: Quickly following the last is this relatively gentle turn. From the middle of the road, aggressively cut into this corner. From turn 2 to this turn you should be in second gear the whole time. Cut in while letting off the throttle—no braking should be needed here since you're already at low speeds. You might even be able to power through the whole time if you've positioned yourself correctly from the previous bend. Power out as you clip the apex. You'll have a brief window to shift to third here given enough power, but depending on how much time there is between this short stretch and the next bend, you may want to just stay in second.

Turn 4: Because it's on an uphill, this curve is surprisingly hard to maneuver through due to the tendency to understeer. It's vital that you brake early before this turn, down to second, and clip the apex. If you take the turn wide, you can easily lose a second off your lap time. Anticipate the turn and cut in, almost to where you feel like you'll eat the grass on the inside of the corner. With the understeer you'll rotate much less than you'd expect. After clearing the bend at around 55 mph, power out—you'll have a bit of a straight here.

Turn 5: Past the crest, you'll see a mild right-hander. At this point you'll likely be in third gear, and will want to drop down to upper RPMs of second gear. When exiting this turn, don't veer to the outer edge of the lane; since the subsequent turns are all in close succession, you never want to drift farther than the middle of the lane, thus making each bend smaller and shorter.

Don't drift to the outside or the chicanes will work you harder than necessary.

Turns 6–10: Past the right-handed kink you'll come across a set of chicanes, starting with another right bend. These curves are similar in shape and will have you traversing them in second gear. Although some sections might tempt you to upshift to third, you'll want to wait until you're on the mini-straight prior to the last turn. Depending on your suspension setup, you can ride over the curbs and aggressively clip the curb of each bend. However, some cars with stiffer suspensions will hop when going over them, which can make you lose precise control over turns. In that case, you'll want to only brush the inside tires against the curb, and keep to the asphalt.

Turn 11: This final turn is key for setting up a fast home straight. You haven't had much time to move to the outside of the lane from the previous turn, so you'll probably be taking this turn from the middle, then cutting in to the inside. At the apex you'll shoot for around 60 mph and quickly power out. There's limited runoff space in the home stretch, so be wary of going excessively wide when hitting the gas out of this 90-degree bend.

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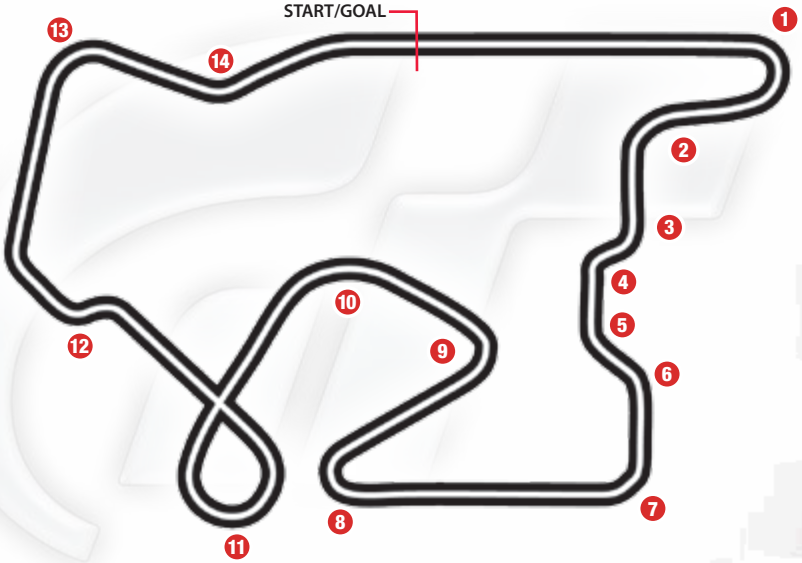
Autumn Ring Forward

Tuning guide: Since this course never gives much room to gain lots of speed, you'll want to keep the gear ratios pretty close. That said, like the Mini track, you might want to keep the second gear relatively tall, since so many of the bends have you hanging around in that gear's RPM range. A taller second gear means you won't have to shift as often, or bounce off the rev limiter endlessly.

Recommended Car: Nimble, responsive cars—lightweight MR, FR, or even FF.



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Turn 1: The hairpin at the onset is the tightest bend in the course, forcing you to drop down to speeds below 50 mph. Use the overhead signs to your right as reference for the braking point. Brake from the outside until you get down to the upper RPM limits of second gear, then turn in while letting off the gas. Ride along the inside of the corner without touching the curb. The track here isn't too wide, and given the slight incline your car will want to understeer. Therefore, wait on the throttle until the you see the curb on the outside appear. Throttle out to the outside of the lane.

Turn 2: Get to the right side of the lane immediately after powering out from the first corner. Drop down to second and cut in. Although there's lots of road to work with here, you should stay in the middle when you exit the corner.

Turns 3–6: From this point you'll maneuver through a set of turns identical to the Mini course (turns 3 to 9 are the same). Refer to the Mini course for more details.

The first four bends are at the same angle. When turning into each, briefly let off the throttle so that you're pointing into the apex. Accelerate out as you clip the apex, but don't go wide. You want each turn to be tight, so if you're drifting wide when powering out, then exercise moderation with the gas around these corners. Again, you'll never want to go into any of these corners with a lot of speed, or else you're greatly increasing the distance you're having to travel.

Turn 7: Coming out of the set of chicanes, you'll be in third gear. Drop down to second, then cut in while leaving your foot off the gas. As soon as you clip the apex, hit the gas and keep your foot on the pedal going out. It's essential that you clip the curb on this bend—otherwise, you won't be able to power out as quickly, hurting your straightline speed.

Turn 8: You've had time to gain a fair amount of speed—prepare to lose it all. Drop down to second and make the bend going around 35 to 40 mph. Once you see the outer curb emerging, power out. Start drifting back to the right side of the road for the next turn.

Turn 9: Go down the hill, and drop down to second gear. You'll want to clip the inside, so turn in early.

Turn 10: At this sweeper the course branches off from the Mini track. The bend can be mostly handled at full throttle, but due to the incline, your car will tend to push to the outside. Cut into the apex at third gear, and as you're hitting the gas coming up the hill, gauge how quickly you're drifting to the outside. Let off the gas or even lightly brake if you're going wide too fast. Don't slam the brakes mid-turn though because it can upset the balance of your car.

Turn 11: One of the few figure-eight bends in the game, this has you go up and over in a teardrop-shaped corner. Drop down to second gear while moving toward the inside. You won't carry much speed here—maybe 50 mph at most—and will keep constant speed until nearing the corner exit. This turn is also up an incline, so you'll drift outside very quickly if you're too hasty on the gas.

Turn 12: Before you've had much time to regain speed, you'll encounter a mild set of three turns, all with the same angle and entry speed. From the outside, turn in, cutting over the striped curb. Due to the shape of the bends, you can almost shoot straight across from here. Cut back to the right for the second bend, sparingly using the throttle so you don't go wide on the apex. Hit the gas briefly, which brings you to the third. Again, cut into the apex, letting off the gas to point your nose in the right direction. Power out for the mini-straight up ahead.

Turn 13: In contrast to the past turns, this one is downhill, and you'll find your car a bit more responsive into the turns due to its weight being shifted forward. Brake and drop down to second gear, holding back slightly on the throttle so you don't go wide. You can start powering out just at the turn's midpoint.

Turn 14: This little kink requires no braking or letting off the gas, just great timing. Cut left to clip the apex, creating a gentle arc.

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Autumn Ring Mini Reverse

Tuning Guide: The setup for your car will be exactly the same as the forward version of Autumn Ring Mini. Since you'll be hanging around in second gear a lot, you may want to make this gear slightly taller so that you have more speed to work with in the RPM range. Due to the short length of this course, the highest gear you'll probably hit is fourth. That said, simply changing the final gear means your second gear will become much shorter, so you'll want to pay special attention to third and second gear.

Recommended Car: Any light-weight and nimble car: FF or FR work well here.

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Turn 1: The initial left-hander requires very little braking, if any, when starting out. Let off the accelerator and cut in early. This track has a lot of maneuvering room, so it's hard to get too wide. If you're coming into the turn from a previous lap, brake down to second gear, cut in, and accelerate out.

Turns 2–6: These set of chicanes can be taken aggressively. Not only can you clip the curbs, but you can also ride over the dirt. AWD tend to be better for on-the-fly off-roading, but don't let it become a habit. These angular kinks can be handled mostly by just letting off the throttle, accelerating out past the apex, and then veering outside. When the next turn approaches, let off the throttle before the turn-in, and repeat. Not accelerating out of the apex and hugging the inside of the apex you just cleared will be bad news, especially if there's still another turn approaching—you'll be caught trying to cut in from the inside and won't have much room to turn. Positioning is the key for these turns—you should never be on the outside with any of these bends.

Turn 7: After the set of chicanes, you'll encounter a kink before zooming on toward a mini-straight. The turn radius isn't as sharp as the chicanes, so you can carry a bit more speed here.

Turns 8, 9: Past the mini-straight you're in for a slightly sharper turn, so you'll have to do some mild braking. Again, let off the gas before turning, cut across the curb and accelerate out toward the outside. Another left-hander immediately follows, and this can be taken at faster speeds—but don't keep your foot on the pedal for too long, because a little sweeper fast approaches.

Turn 10: This mini-sweeper has you going up a hill, and lower-horsepower cars (especially those with lightened flywheels) will find their power sapped. As such, it might not require you to drop as much speed as you'd expect. Keep tight around the bend, and when you're around halfway, start accelerating out. As you speed out of the corner, start merging toward the right side because the tightest turn of the track is coming up.

Turn 11: This final turn is not only on an incline, but is also very steep. You can't carry much velocity through here, and will likely need to drop down to second gear. As you're rounding the corner, keep in mind that a later apex is ideal. Even though there's plenty of runoff space with the wide roads, if you steer too wide then you're taking a much longer (and slower) path than necessary, sacrificing your lap time as a result.

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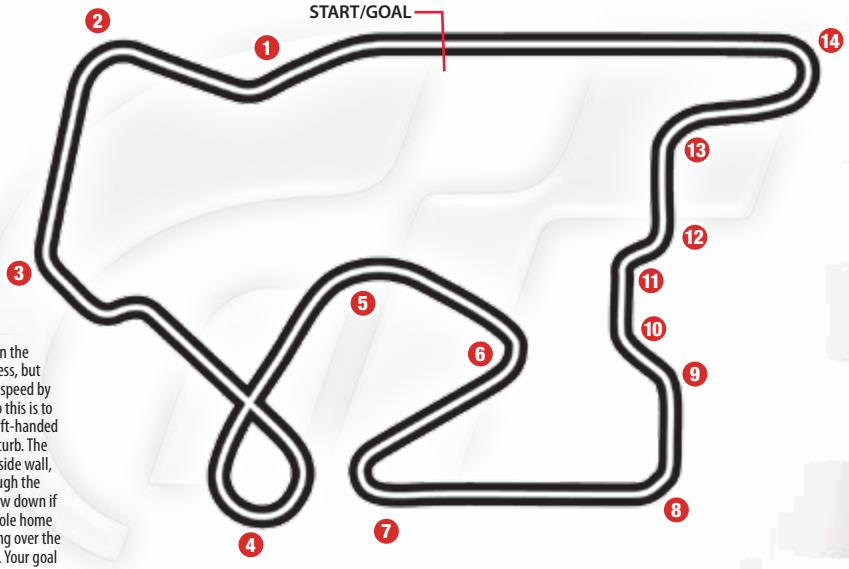
Autumn Ring (Reverse)

Tuning Guide: The same tuning rules apply as the Autumn Ring forward course. This is all about taking the turns with maximum speed. Lots of negative camber can be helpful since you're not braking or accelerating much. You might want to keep the second gear tall while having the final gear close, ensuring you don't bounce off the rev limiter on the multitude of second-gear turns. On the flip side, you'll want to have close gear ratios overall, since you're never going to pick up much top end here.

Recommended Car: Lightweight MR cars are ideal for their balance and responsiveness, though FR or even FF can work here.



Turn 1: When racing the track in the normal direction this kink is harmless, but in reverse you've tacked on a lot of speed by the time you've hit this. The trick to this is to hug the inside edge of the initial left-handed kink, and to drive over the striped curb. The closer you can brush against the inside wall, the more speed you can carry through the bend. Regardless, you'll have to slow down if you've accelerated through the whole home straight. Hit the brakes after crossing over the left curb, down one gear (usually to third). Quickly snap to the right, letting off the gas as needed. Your goal is to clip the apex—just don't slam the brakes mid-turn or your rear will get unstable. Don't get too gung ho about powering out of the corner, because turn 2 is coming right up.

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Turn 2: This turn will easily send you crashing into the wall on your right because you'll be coming in hot, and also because the incline means your car will resist turning. You'll need to slow down a fair amount, even dropping down one gear. Power out at the apex—if you've dropped enough speed initially you should have enough room to drift outside at full throttle.

Turn 3: These three sets of turns will have you keeping in second or third gear throughout. Let off the throttle before cutting into each bend, power out briefly until you need to cut into the next corner, and then repeat.

Turn 4: You'll continue your descent downward, this time to a sharp, tear-shaped turn. Brake to second and turn into the inside. Since the bend is relatively long, you'll be driving right beside the curb for most of the corner. Power out when you see the outside curb coming into view.

Turn 5: After going underneath an overpass, you'll come to a mild sweeper. This can be taken pretty quickly, but nevertheless you can't keep your foot planted on the gas the whole time. Modulate the throttle to stay inside until you're at least halfway through the bend, otherwise you'll fall out to the side of the road.

Turn 6: The latter half of this course merges with the Autumn Ring Mini course—refer to the mini course for additional details (turns 10, 11, and turns 1–6 in the Mini track). You're going downhill this time, and now the track will start winding up. Therefore this turn can surprise you, especially when you try throttling out—the car will want to quickly plow into the outside railing. Wait a little to apply the throttle, treating the turn as a late apex.

Turn 7: One of the slowest turns on this course, 7 makes you drop down below 50 mph to make a tight turn. Given the tendency to understeer, avoid hitting the throttle until you're deep into the turn.

Turn 8: A pretty tame left-hander. You'll want to drop down to second gear to take it. Cut in, making sure you clip the curb, otherwise you'll be sacrificing speed through the exit. Although the track is wide, don't use that as an excuse and not clip the inside. Power out as you exit because you'll want your car to go wide for setting up the next turn.

Turns 9–12: Slower cars can cut straight across the grass here to get an edge on the competition.

These chicanes are the same as the other Autumn Ring layouts, and require the same strategy. More than likely, by the time you hit this track you've already gotten acquainted with these sharp bends. Stay in second through these turns, and depending on your car, you can aggressively clip the curbs and cut over the dirt. Don't hit the gas to the point where you drift to the outside of the lane. Gas out of each apex to the middle and let off the throttle to cut into the next bend.

At turns 11 and 12 there's quite a bit of dirt that you can shamelessly cut across, which allows you to take them in third gear. If you take that route, you can straight-shoot the two turns with very little correction. Just be sure to keep to the left lane for the upcoming harder right-hander.

Turn 13: At this point, the course splits off from the Autumn Ring Mini reverse path, and your car will again hesitate to turn because of the hill. That said, you shouldn't have too much speed from the last bend, so you'll likely get away without having to brake much, if at all. Let off the gas and cut into the corner, then power out. The only thing to be mindful of is that the next turn is the tightest in the course, and you'll want to swing out to the center-right side to set up for the corner.

Turn 14: This final turn will make you drop down to second gear. Speeds will be in mid 30s or low 40s. You'll want to take the tightest radius (without riding along the curb) so that you can get past it as quickly as you can. It's better to drive on the inside at 35 mph than on the outside at 50 mph. Power out as you pass the halfway point, the road is wide here so you have room to throttle out.

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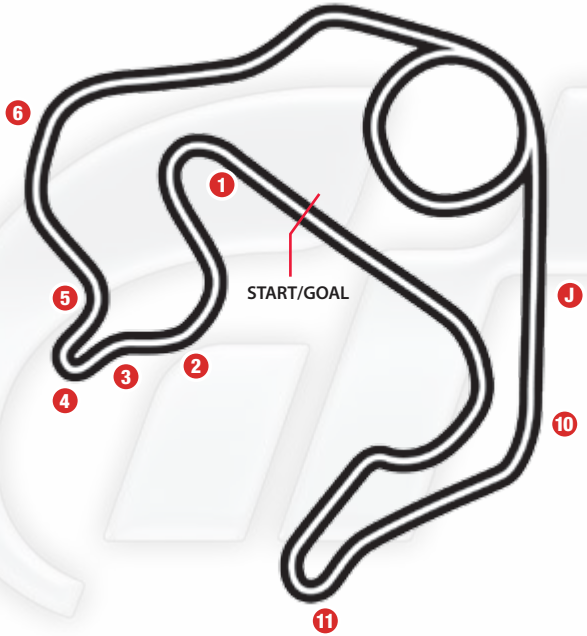
Cape Ring North

Tuning Guide: The northern track has an assortment of turns, including tight hairpins, angled bends, and fast sweepers. Thus, your speed in the corners is very important; there's not a whole lot of straight-line acceleration. Keep gear ratios short to maximize acceleration.

Recommended Car: Nimble MR cars.



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Turn 1: This slow sweeper just needs a good braking point. From the outside, slow down to second gear and turn in. By the time you get to the inside, you should be going around 40 mph. Get as close to the inside curb as you can, but don't clip it. You can power out just as you cross the turn's midpoint.

Turns 2, 3: This is actually an increasing-radius S-curve, with the latter curve being subtle. Don't blow off the second bend though, because you can fall outside the track if you're too zealous with the gas. From about the middle of the road, cut into the inside of the first right-handed bend and closely ride along the inside. You can't power out until you're about three-fourths of the way through the bend—the more you drift to the outside, the more you'll have to slow down for the immediate left-hander. There's a sweet spot where you can diagonally cut across the road, and it's a straight-shot across the apex of the left bend. A tight hairpin soon follows, so be ready to slam the brakes.

Turns 4, 5: Immediately after crossing the apex of the left-hander, you'll have to hit the brakes hard for this 180-degree right. Although the shape of the bend is squared off, you'll still be making a circular arc around the corner. From about the middle of the lane, point the nose of your car to the corner entry, then slow down to about 40 mph. Let off the gas through the turn, keeping your speed around 30 mph through the bend. A left-hander is ahead, so you'll need to hold off on the gas until you've just about cleared the turn. The left-hander itself is trivial because you're going into it at such low speed—just power on through.

Turn 6: You'll be entering a gradual right-handed sweep that swings uphill for turn 6. The turning radius decreases ever so slightly before it briefly straightens out, so you'll need to let off the gas and cut in. You'll notice the sharper bend on the Driving Line, so it's nothing too difficult.

Turn 7: As you're climbing the crest of a hill, you'll hit a blind left-hander. Since you can't actually see the turn until you past the crest, you'll just have to turn hard to the left from about the center of the road. When you do so, you'll be able to keep you foot on the gas the entire time. Be sure to turn in before the crest, and not at the top; the change in load as you hit the crest will make your turn-in less responsive.

Turn 8: Not long after, you'll encounter another blind turn, and this time you'll need to lightly hit the brakes. The turn-in timing is everything here. It's easy to use too much of the brakes, and you'll probably need to practice this bend a couple of times to get it perfect. Although the runoff space is short, this is a relatively forgiving area due to the road being so close to the wall.

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Turn 9: Here you enter the iconic, spiraled-circle turn of the course. Your speeds here will be pretty high with the turn's banking, hovering around 100 mph. When turning in you'll need to use very little brakes. With many cars you can simply let off the throttle when turning in, and then hit the gas as you get close to the inside lane. Through the circular turn try to maintain a constant speed. About three-fourths of the way through the circle the angle of the bank gradually decreases, which will lead to your car gradually drifting to the outside. At this point, start letting off the throttle to prevent hitting the outer wall.

The Jump: Cape Ring is one of the few non-dirt tracks that actually has a sizable jump. You'll want to align your car perfectly straight with the road, and on the outside prior to getting air time. When you land, you'll be right at the braking point for the descending right-hander.

Turn 10: With the decline and the bank, this turn will surprisingly enable you to carry more speed. Only moderate braking is required here, and you'll be able to take the turn in fourth gear. If you're able to power out with room to spare, then you took this bend too slow. When powering out, stay on the outside to set up for the impending hairpin.

Turn 11: This second hairpin is somewhat difficult, mainly because you'll be braking while slightly turning. The emphasis is on *slightly*, though—you don't want strong steering inputs here or else your tail will want to rotate. Just slam the brakes while lightly nudging the steering to the left for the left-handed kink. Like turn 4, the speed on this squared-off bend is slow—in the 30 mph range. On the bright side, you'll have lots of room to power out.

Turn 12: The final turn here is actually four angular turns—and you should aim to clip three of the four apexes. Slow down to third gear, and turn in from the outside, clipping the first apex. The second apex is straight ahead, and you can cut diagonally across the road to hit it. The radius of your turn eases up here, which allows you to hit the gas a little. But don't go overboard or else you'll be wide from the remaining two turns. The third apex is the one you *don't* want to clip, because the road at this point is too straight to turn in. When you're approaching the last apex, let off the throttle until your nose is pointed into the turn. Punch the gas again right before you clip the apex—there's plenty of runoff space on the track here.

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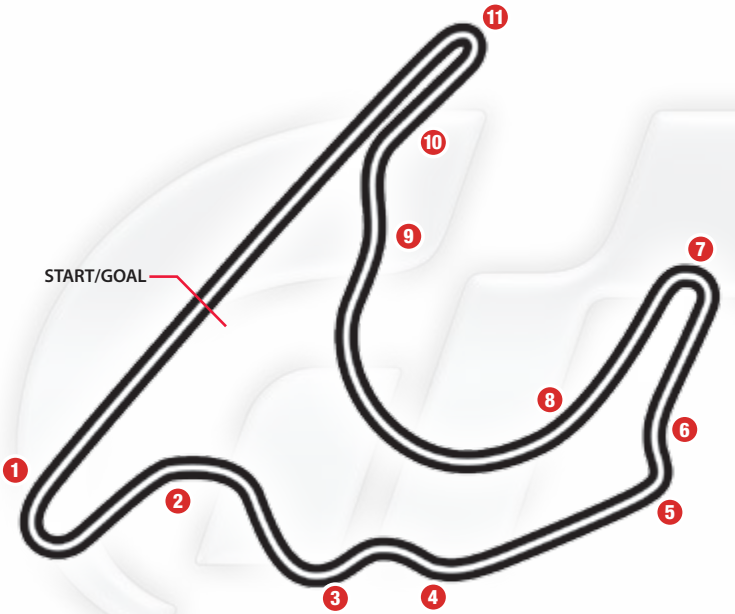
Cape Ring South

Tuning Guide: In contrast to the North track, the South portion of Cape Ring has many more turns and in general isn't as fast. So it's great for using lots of negative camber. The lack of drastic elevation changes mean you're able to use stiffer suspension settings. And because there's really only one short straight section, your gear ratios can be short.

Recommended Car: Agile, light MR cars.



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Turn 1: After the lone straight in the course, you'll hit a somewhat slow 180-degree sweeper. From the outside, slow down to second, then cut in. Because you'll be going up an incline, the car will have a tendency to understeer. Keep your speed around 50 mph and power out late in the corner, around the three-fourths mark. With another turn approaching, you don't have much room to power out to the outside here.

Turn 2: This mellow sweeper will at most have you let off the throttle. It's slightly banked and on a decline, so it's hard to mess up the corner. That said, you'll still want to cut in and anticipate the apex. In addition, keep off the striped curb because it's at an off-camber angle.

Turns 3, 4: Following the right-handed sweeper you'll come across a set of S-curves. The first part of the S is slower than the second, and you'll need to hit the brakes enough to almost drop a gear. Cut into the corner, and since the curb are less angled here, you can ride slightly over them. The latter half of the S-curve is quicker, and won't require any braking at all; at most, you'll need to let off the gas when exiting the first bend and turning into the second.

Turns 5, 6: This 80-degree turn is fairly straightforward. From the outside, drop to about third gear, then cut in, clipping the apex at the curb. Don't hit the gas too early here because a right-handed kink immediately follows. You'll want to hit the throttle once you're past the apex, which enables you to smoothly cut in for the next bend. By doing so, you'll cut down the angle of the right-handed kink, making it almost a straight shot.

Turn 7: Yet another 180-degree turn, this one is very similar to the first sweeper you encountered on turn 1. From the outside, drop down to second gear and turn in. Your speeds through this bend will be slow, around 30 to 40 mph. Once you're about two-thirds of the way through the corner, power out.

Turn 8: The giant, 180-degree sweeper is the highlight of the South track. It's banked, very quick, and easy to navigate; only let off the throttle when you're going wide. Because the turn straightens out naturally, you won't go wide out of the corner either.

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Turns 9, 10: Soon after the sweeper is a left turn, followed by a right-hander. Both turns are surprisingly quick, so take both at speeds near or over 100 mph. The initial left will have you momentarily take you foot off the gas at the most. The second turn will require some braking, but it's more a blip of the brakes than substantial deceleration.

Turn 11: To conclude the South track is a slow hairpin. As you might expect, it follows the usual formula for these types of turns—start from the outside, drop down dramatically in speed, cut in. Your speed for this turn will be in the neighborhood of 35 mph. Power out two-thirds of the way through the turn and make your way to the finish line.

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Cape Ring Outside

Tuning Guide: Since the Outside course gets rid of all the hairpins and sweepers on the inside, it is the fastest track layout in terms of average speed. The tuning philosophy will be similar to the full Cape Ring course, except you'll want to emphasize acceleration over other dimensions like camber.

Recommended Car: FR cars with great acceleration.

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Turn 1: Unlike the North track, this turn 1 bend requires braking since it comes after a straight. From the outside, slow down to third and ride along the inside, getting close to the curb but never touching it. The bend is slightly banked here, and you'll be able to maintain speeds at least in the 70 mph range.

Turn 2: The road starts climbing while gradually sweeping to the right. For the most part you can keep your foot on the gas, but the turning radius decreases slightly and you'll need to cut in by letting off the throttle. Ride along the inside to make the bend shorter. The more outside you are, the longer the path becomes.

Turn 3: If you look at the minimap, the left-handed kink here seems benign. But when you're actually on the road, it's a bit of a nuisance. The bend is just beyond the crest of the hill, and you can't see it until you're on the other side. Cut the steering hard to the left as you hit the crest, from about the center of the road. If you time it right, you can stay on the throttle the whole time.

Turn 4: Following the kink, you'll face yet another blind turn. But unlike turn 3, you'll need to lightly hit the brakes. The turn-in timing is everything here, and it's easy to overcompensate for the turn and brake too much. If you're finding your car going too wide out of the exit, let off the gas to prevent hitting the steel railing.

Turn 5: If you've played the other track variants of Cape Ring, this should be familiar territory. The circular spiral will allow you to carry lots of speed due to its bank—about 100 mph. Stay on the inside, but avoid going into the blue portion that's close to the inner railing—it's not banked at all there, and if you run into it you'll find your car quickly drifting outward. Let off the throttle if your car goes outside of the center of the road while traversing the circle. Once you're three-fourths of the way through, the bank gradually flattens out and you car will naturally want to go wide. Follow the Driving Line, and don't let the car get wide to the point of hitting the outside railing.

The Jump: One of the unique qualities of this circuit is that it has a huge jump. Before lifting off, be sure you're pointing straight down the road. Avoid passing anybody right before this section.

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Turn 6: When you land and see the red band on the Driving Line telling you to brake, it's easy to slow down too much for this banked turn. You'll likely get away with just blipping the brakes and letting off the gas as you turn in.

Turn 7: You're now entering the South portion of the course, although in the opposite direction. The chicane is beyond a crest, so you won't even see it when you start braking. The initial bend will have you in fourth gear, but the subsequent right requires you to slow down to second gear. You'll want to aggressively cut into the apex for the right-hander, and even cross a bit over the grass on the inside. Power out once you clear the apex.

Turn 8: You'll now encounter a series of S-curves with the middle being the slowest. Start by moving into the right side of the lane. Hit the brakes until you're in third, and cut into the apex of the left-hander, slightly riding over the inside curb. This lets you keep a relatively straight pathway.

Turns 9, 10: The right-hander that follows is a bit tricky because it's an increasing-radius turn. Before taking the bend, let off the gas and blip the brakes if necessary. Don't run too wide here, or else you'll be in a poor position for the last sweeper. The last bend is a decreasing-radius turn, and toward the latter half you should let off the gas so you can stay on the inside.

Turn 11: After a short straight, you'll hit the final turn of the course. The 180-degree hairpin is standard—brake down to second, round the bend at around 50 mph while getting as close as you can to the inside curb. Power out two-thirds of the way through the corner and you're on to the home straight.

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Cape Ring

Tuning Guide: The full version is long and arduous, with a mix everything—from straights to hairpins to sweepers to chicanes. You'll need an all-round setup. The roads are very smooth, and with the exception of one big jump, there aren't any bumps or dips in the pavement. So, use stiffer suspension settings here. Since the track is more turn-heavy, you can dial in some negative camber, too.

Recommended Car: High-performance MR or AWD.

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Turn 1: The first half of Cape Ring is identical to Cape Ring South—read the Cape South guide from turns 1 to 10 to get specific tips on the southern half. The only difference from the South course is that the final turn instead becomes a straight, which connects to the North section. Also, you'll immediately notice that the full-circuit version runs in an opposite direction to Cape Ring North.

With the brief straight, you'll have to slow down a bit for the initial sweeper, down to third gear. Aggressively ride along the inside of the bend, going around 70 mph.

Turn 2: After climbing a hill, you'll come to a tight sweeper. Slow down to second gear and round the bend at about 50 mph. Don't hit the gas until you're three-fourths of the way out of the corner, otherwise you'll go too wide on the relatively narrow road.

Turn 3: This angular sweeper has four apexes, and will have you going around the corners in a wide arc. You'll want to barely miss the first apex and accelerate out to the outside. As you're halfway between the first and second apex, blip the brakes, then cut in, clipping the second apex. The third apex you'll miss entirely because it's too far infield. Power out as the third apex passes to your right, then let off the gas as you're halfway between the third and fourth apex. Since this sweeper is followed immediately by a left-hander, you'll need to blip the brakes as you clip the fourth apex.

Turn 4: If you have a good racing line coming out of turn 4, this 90-degree left-hander shouldn't be much of an issue. From the previous turn's apex, cut into the left toward the apex of turn 4. You can also aggressively clip the inside curb if you've dropped enough speed, which allows you to power out quicker.

Turn 5: Following a short straight, you'll come across this hairpin. It's a fairly standard hairpin—brake from the outside down to second, turn in, and maintain a speed of 40 mph while riding along the inside. Power out three-fourths through the turn.

Turn 6: The road stretches out for a little while, then kinks to the left. Since you haven't gained much speed here, you can just power on through. The subsequent straight will have the jump, so make sure your car is straight and avoid overtaking anybody here.

Turn 7: From this direction you'll be starting at the top of the circular spiral and making your way down. You should be able to cut in by just letting off the throttle, and at most briefly hit the brakes. While traversing the banked bend, avoid the inside edge of the track, which has no bank. Since the spiral is going downhill, you'll also notice you don't have as big of a problem with understeer coming out of the corner.

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Turns 8, 9: With the rocky wall on the inside, this left-hander is a blind turn. Slow down to third, cutting into the corner at around 90 mph. Aggressively cut into the inside and ride on the curb with your inside tires—this will straighten the racing line for the subsequent right-hander, so stay on the gas for the whole time.

Turn 11 : If you've positioned yourself correctly from the previous turn, this right should be fairly simple. Slow down to third and make your way to the inside, maintaining a speed around 65 mph. Since you have a wider road to work with, you can power out at the halfway point, leading you to the home straight. The final straight is the quickest part of the course, which makes the exit of this turn important for overtaking opponents in front of you.

Turn 10: In this direction you'll need to blip the brakes before taking this moderate, left-handed sweeper. Don't drop down a gear, but stay in fourth. The bend will let up for a little while before becoming tighter for the latter half. Left off the gas as you turn in for the second part of the sweeper, which should be enough to ride along the inside. Don't power out quickly because you'll need to stay inside for the upcoming 90-degree right.

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Cape Ring Inside

Tuning Guide: The inside track is the shortest of all the Cape Ring courses, and also the simplest. You can use very stiff suspension settings here because it doesn't have the big jump. Gear ratios should also be very close to maximize acceleration.

Recommended Car: Agile FR, MR cars.

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Turn 1: The slow sweeping left is fairly standard. From the outside, drop down to second gear and turn in while letting off the gas. When traversing the inside you should be going around 40 mph. Get close to the inside, but don't touch it. Power out just as you're three-fourths of the way through the turn—you'll have curb on the outside edge of the track for runoff, but it's pretty narrow here.

Turn 2: Since you've just come out of a tight sweeper, this right-hander can be powered through until the midpoint of the bend (the apex). The road then curves to the left, and you don't want to drift too much to the outside. From the apex of the first turn, cut diagonally across the road to the left and ride along the inside curb of the left-hander.

Turn 3: Because you've gained some speed from the small straight, it's easy to go too hot into this turn. If that happens, ride over the curb and even over the grass. It will disqualify you in Time Attack runs, but in a race against others it might help you get ahead (or widen the lead). Those who want to keep to the roads should be on the left side of the road, then cut diagonally across the road, clipping the curb (but not going into the grass).

Turn 4: The wide, 180-degree sweeper here is banked, so keep your foot firmly planted on the accelerator for practically the whole duration. Let off the throttle if you're drifting from the inside, and avoid touching the grass just beyond the track.

Turn 5: Like the North track, the final turn here is a sweeper comprising four angular turns. Decelerate to third gear and turn in from the outside, clipping the curb at the first apex. The second apex is straight ahead; cut diagonally across the road to hit it. The radius of the turn eases at the middle, allowing you to hit the gas a little—but don't go too wide from the remaining two turns. The third apex is one you won't want to clip because it's too far infield. When approaching the last apex, take your foot off the gas pedal until your nose is pointed into the turn. Then, get on the accelerator again right before you clip the apex. Now tackle the short home straight.

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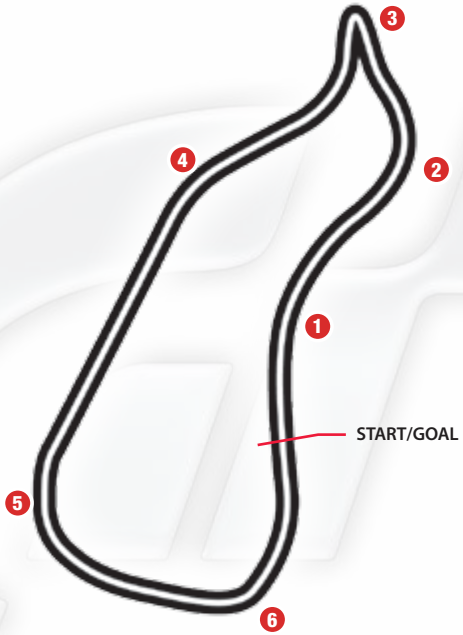
Chamonix Mini

Tuning Guide: Because of the extremely short length of the course, it's doubtful you'll ever get above fourth gear. You can use very short gear ratios for this course, but don't try making them so short that you'll top out in sixth gear. There's a certain point where the gears are so short that you're hurting acceleration from all the gear changes.

Recommended Car: Production or rally-racer AWD cars, with snow tires.



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Turn 1: In spite of the speed you're carrying here, this sweeper has you only lifting off the gas to make the bend. A sharper bend is just ahead though, and its braking point is somewhat obscured by the fence on your right, so be prepared to hit the brakes.

Turn 2: As the previous turn starts straightening out, you'll need to hit the brakes and drop down to second gear. Modulate the throttle as you're making your way through the inside of this left-hander, and don't go wide.

Turn 3: A big Polyphony Digital arch ahead is your cue to start braking hard. The turn is so sharp that you'll want to come almost to a halt, so slow way down. Think 20 mph or below should be your target at the apex. If you want to be adventurous, you can try to do an e-brake turn, which will allow you to rotate your car quickly. To execute an e-brake turn, let go of the gas and brakes, and hit the e-brake while cutting the steering wheel hard in the direction you want to turn. Let off the e-brake before you car completely rotates in the direction you want it to, and countersteer if needed.

Turn 4: As the Driving Line suggests, this kink only requires a blip of the brakes to maneuver through. Turn and then get back on the gas immediately.

Turn 5: This bend looks like a regular sweeper, but is actually a decreasing-radius turn. From the outside lane, hit the brakes and drop down to third gear. Start turning into the initial bend, and before you cross the Pirelli sign overhead, slow down some more, this time downshifting to second. You'll be maintaining a speed of about 65 to 70 mph through here. You'll power out very late—when you're almost out of the turn.

Turn 6: The final turn is more simpler than the last, but also slower. You should already be in the outside lane from powering out in the last turn. Slow down to second gear and cut into the inside of the turn. Your speeds will be in the 50 to 55 mph range. If this is your final lap, you can power out to the outside, but if you have another lap to take on, stay toward the left-center of the road because you'll need to set up for the left-handed sweeper at turn 1.

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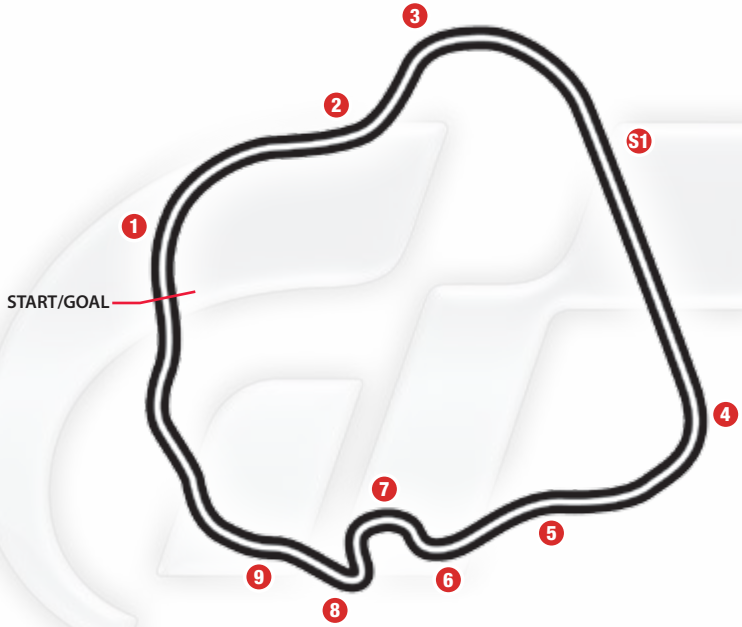
Chamonix East

Tuning Guide: Much of the East track overlaps with the full course. However, this section never lets you pile on the speeds of the full course. You'll want to have your gear ratios short. Since there's a lot of bends and kinks without much braking, negative camber may be useful here.

Recommended Car: High-powered AWD production or rally cars.



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Turn 1: You're starting the course from a fairly straight stretch, and if you're entering this sweeping right from a previous lap or a running start, you'll need to hit the brakes a bit, slowing down to third gear. Stay toward the inside, but don't hit the outlying snow beyond the track or you'll slow down significantly. Modulate the throttle to maintain the inside—about halfway in, you may need to let off the throttle because the bend gets a little tighter.

Turn 2: The path then gradually sweeps to the right while going uphill. You'll cut back, this time riding along the left side of the road. Although the radius of the bend is similar to turn 1, you'll be going slightly slower, hovering around 90 to 100 mph. Just past the apex you'll need to start slowing down for a sharper, right-handed sweeper.

Turn 3: Here you'll face an increasing-radius turn, meaning the turn starts off slower and then gradually increases in speed. You'll need plenty of time to slow down, and positioning is key here. If you've hit the throttle coming out of turn 2, you'll be at an awkward angle to take this bend. Once you're past the tighter first half, the corner becomes easier. Stay on the throttle throughout most of the bend, but when the sweeper starts going downhill, lift off the gas pedal.

Straight 1: There's not much to say about this straight other than that it's a great passing opportunity. There are no bumps or sudden jumps throughout this stretch, meaning you can get some good speed leading to the right-hander.

Turn 4: Arguably the most entertaining section of this course, this is a steeply banked right-hander that will allow you to carry lots of speed through the bend. You'll stay in fourth, and your speeds can hover above 110 mph. Avoid any sudden turns or brake inputs because your tail can come loose very easily here. Once you're halfway through the turn, the path narrows, and you'll have to take your foot off the throttle momentarily to stay in the middle of the road.

Turn 5: The path kinks slightly to the left, and because the road is very narrow here, you should brake down to third gear.

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Turn 6: As you continue climbing up the hill, you'll reach a blind right-hander just beyond the crest. Your braking point is before you even see the turn. Slow down to second gear, and start turning in right after you reach the crest. This starts the slowest section of the course, and your speed will hover around 40 mph around the bend.

Turn 7: This U-shaped bend is a decreasing-radius turn. You'll be going around 55 mph for the first half, and then slow down to second gear for the second half, staying along the inside at speeds around 45 mph. You don't want to power out and drift outside because the slowest turn of the course is immediately ahead.

Turn 8: It's easy to get sapped of power here because the turn is not only really slow, but also on an incline. With speeds dropping down to 30 mph and lower, you may need to drop down to first gear if you don't have enough torque with second. You could also hit the brakes and gas at the same time, which allows you to carry higher RPM at lower speeds (that said, the default controller settings cannot brake and accelerate simultaneously—you'd need to remap the controller).

Turn 9: Once you're out of that painfully slow right, you're pretty much home free. There are lots of little kinks and bends on the way to the finish line, but most can be taken at full throttle. The few that can't will only require a blip of the brakes before turning into the apex. Stay in the middle until you cross the finish line, which will minimize your steering input and maximize speed.

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Chamonix West

Tuning Guide: The longest of the partial sections, it's also one of the more technical courses. Although there's a long straight, it's filled with bumps and imperfections on the road that can really work your suspension. Therefore, you want your suspension to be soft. Gear ratios will be medium-close, and the car may benefit from downforce to the front and rear.

Recommended Car: High-powered AWD production or rally cars.

Turn 1: This initial right requires only a bit of braking—you may be able to just let off the throttle. Keep your racing line on the inside of the turn and get ready to brake before the corner even unwinds.

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Turn 2: Turn 2 has a killjoy chicane, which forces you to slow down to second gear. When crossing the apex, your speed should be around 65 mph. Power out as you go past the halfway point and begin a brief descent downhill.

Turn 3: You'll have a pleasant straight section before running into this relatively uneventful left-hander. It tightens in two spots—the first third of the turn and again at the two-thirds mark. Neither needs any serious braking, and for the most part you can get by with just lifting off the gas pedal.

Turn 4: Be prepared for a sluggish section, starting with a 90-degree left-hander. You'll need lots of room to brake. Slow down to around 55 mph, which should be in second gear. Sharp steering inputs are generally inadvisable because it's easier to lose control, so you'll take this turn starting from the inside. When rounding the bend, stay as close to the inside, next to the raised plateau of snow, as possible.

Turn 5: Here's another left-hander, although this can be cheated somewhat by climbing over the snowy mound on the inside. Don't power out much because you face a 180-degree sweeper ahead.

Turn 6: This 180-degree sweeper is an increasing-radius bend, meaning the tightest part is at the onset. Slow down plenty, at least to 40 mph, then round the bend while staying on the inside. For the second half, you can start increasing your speed to about 60 mph.

Turn 7: Thankfully, you've reached the last bend in this tortuous section. It's a sweeping left where you'll want to again ride the inside. Get on the gas when you're about three-fourths of the way through.

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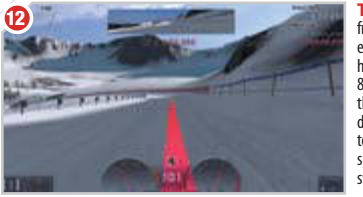
Straight 1: The dastardly straight here has some serious kinks and bumps that make the Mulsanne straight in Circuit de la Sarthe seem serene by comparison. Avoid sudden corrections or load changes while going down this path. Also, avoid overtaking others, unless you can do so with minimal steering input.

Turns 8, 9: If you haven't crashed into the snowy walls from the tumultuous straight, you'll need to hit the brakes for this moderate, left-handed kink. Drop down to third gear and go through the bend. It dips down slightly, past the apex, and you'll risk hitting the wall to your left if you're carrying too much speed here. The path then gently rolls uphill and to the left for turn 8, but it's mild enough that you won't need to slow down at all—that is, until the second half. As you reach the crest, the road abruptly drops downhill. Cut to the right before the descent, which will position you for the sweeper ahead.

Turn 10: How you've positioned yourself from turn 9 will determine how fast you can take this turn. If you're on the outside (right side) of the road, you can take the corner starting out in fourth and let the bank aid you in rounding the corner. As you approach the apex, let off the throttle, allowing the drag and resistance to bleed your speed down to around 80 mph.

Turn 11: The sweeper is followed by a sharp chicane that consists of two 90-degree bends. Slow down to second, and from the middle lane cut in, going around 40 mph at the apex of both bends. For the second turn you'll want to hit the gas two-thirds of the way out of the corner.



Turn 12: The road starts going steeply downhill from a straight, and you'll quickly accelerate to speeds exceeding 100 mph. The left-hander that's ahead will have you moderately hit the brakes and slow to about 80 mph. Don't get too trigger-happy with the gas, though, because halfway through the corner the road drops in elevation drastically, and you car will be prone to hitting the outside wall. Maintain the same general speed until you come across a 90-degree, left-handed sweeper.

Turn 13: The sweeper is fairly simple because you've finished descending the mountain. It's flat, and as long as you're at speeds around 65 mph you won't have any problems. The road ahead has a lot of minor bends and kinks, and most can be handled with occasional blips of the brakes or by letting off the gas.

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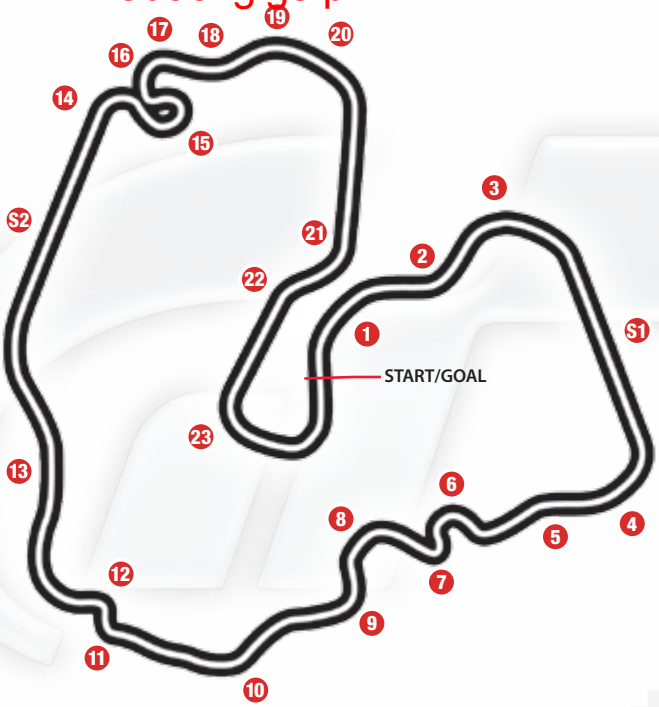
Chamonix

Tuning Guide: In spite of the thick snow, you can pick up a lot of speed at some of the straighter sections, even nearing 150 mph. Consequently, gear ratios should be medium-close, with an emphasis on acceleration but some room to stretch past 100 mph. Snow tires are a must for traction. There are few jumps and bumpy stretches, so you might get away with stiffer and lower settings than dirt or gravel courses.

Recommended Car: High-powered AWD production or rally cars.



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Turn 1: You're starting this race right after a sharp left-hander, so you won't be going with much speed into the start of the S-curve. It's a fairly quick right-hander, too, so maintain speeds around 100 mph. Stay in fourth gear, letting off the throttle occasionally to stay on the racing line.

Turn 2: The S-curve here gets tighter with the left-hander, and you'll need to slow down a bit to navigate the bend. Before turning in, blip the brakes to drop your speed down to roughly 80 mph. The turn winds up an incline and it's easy to go wide as you reach the crest. Go easy on the accelerator because the right-hander on the horizon means you won't want to drift to the right.

Turn 3: This increasing-radius right is easy once you're past the initial tight bend. Briefly hit the brakes before turning in from the left-center of the lane, gradually cutting into the inside. Once you're getting close to the halfway point, you can hit the gas—but watch out because the sweeper starts going downhill, and if you carry too much speed you'll slam into the outside wall. It's not a race-killer, but for Time Attacks it can invalidate your run.

TIP: Similar to dirt courses, snow courses require soft steering touches. Avoid extreme tail slides on the faster bends, or else you'll hurt your lap times.

Straight 1: From here the road stretches out, allowing you to gain lots of speed. This is the fastest part of the course, with the decline helping you to push speeds of 150 mph. Just don't get carried away because a right-hander is at the end.

Turn 4: Although this right looks like you'll have to slam the brakes, in reality you don't have to slow down much. The road does narrow about two-thirds of the way through though, so the latter part of the turn is slower, essentially making this a decreasing-radius bend. The steep bank on the first half will enable you to carry speeds near 100 mph, but let off the gas and gradually drop to about 80 mph at the two-thirds mark.

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Turn 5: Space is very tight in this little S-curve, so blip the brakes as you go up the hill, staying on the right side of the road. A sharp sweeper is just ahead at the crest, so be prepared to brake for a blind right-hander.

Turn 7: The sharpest bend in the course, turn 7 will have you come almost to a screeching halt, with speeds in the 20s and low 30s. The good news is that the corner is short—once you're just about to clear the bend, power out.

Turns 9, 10: Since you've been modulating the throttle throughout the previous complex, U-shaped sweeper, you're driving at speeds such that you can take this without hitting the brakes. Let off the gas for the initial turn in, then power out. The road subsequently bends to the left, and it's so mild that you won't need to slow down at all.

Slow down and start moving to the inside at this point.

Turn 6: You're now entering one of the slower stretches of the course. This U-shaped sweeper is a decreasing-radius corner, which means you'll need to hit the brakes mid-corner. Your speed here will hover around 50 to 60 mph at the beginning, but for the final two-thirds it'll need to come way down. The latter section can catch you by surprise because the tightening bend is right atop a crest and you won't see it until it's too late. Slow down and turn in even before you see the turn radius decrease and ride the inside of the bend. By doing so, you'll be properly positioning yourself for the ultra-slow left-hander.

Turn 8: Yet another U-shaped bend, this one can really run away from you if you're gung ho with the gas. It'll feel like a decreasing-radius bend, with the corner abruptly tightening at the first two-fifths. Let off the gas on approach and move toward the inside. Otherwise, it's really easy to bang into the wall. The bend tightens a bit toward the last part of the turn, so you'll have to be careful with your throttle inputs throughout.

Turn 10: As you're climbing up a hill, you'll face a blind right-hander. It's not too tricky—just start turning in before you reach the crest. You should be in third gear for the turn, with speeds hovering around 75 mph at the apex. Power out for the mini-straight ahead.

Turn 11: This speed-bleeding chicane forces you to slow down dramatically. There no surprises here, though. From the outside, you'll slow down to second, then cut into the right-hander. At the apex you should be off the gas, and your speed will be in the neighborhood of 40 mph. The immediate left should be taken at a similar speed, and although you'll have a brief moment to hit the gas, you'll need to blip the brakes before cutting into the apex. Since a right-handed sweeper is ahead, stay off the throttle until you've pretty much cleared the bend.

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Turn 12: The road widens from here, giving you more wiggle room for the turns. This sweeping right is banked, and you'll be able to carry some speed through the bend. Stay on the gas until about the halfway point, then let off, with your speed hovering around 90 mph. As the road starts gently curving to the left, plant your foot on the accelerator—this is one of the quicker sections of the course, and you can get up to at least 140 mph.

Turn 13: This semi-blind right-hander will need some mild to moderate braking because of all the speed you've picked up at this point. That said, it's still a peppy turn, and you should maintain an average speed of 110 mph. Modulate the throttle as necessary while ensuring you're staying inside through the bend. As the incline starts to flatten out, you can stay on the gas.

Straight 2: A long straight rivaling the first in speed, this would even quicker if it weren't for the bumps and little jumps in the road. Worse yet, because of the snow it's really hard to distinguish the bumps—they're practically invisible. Because it's easy to upset the load and balance of the car here, you don't want to be making many steering adjustments. When competing against others, this can be a dangerous place to pass. If you are cutting your steering wheel to pass right as you hit a little jump, disaster can strike at speeds nearing 150 mph. Therefore, maintain a smooth line even when overtaking and avoid making sharp steering inputs.

Turn 14: Your speed-induced adrenaline high comes to an end with these windy, sluggish bends. Since you're barreling down the straight at 150 mph, you'll need plenty of real estate to slow down. Fortunately, there are some landmarks on the sides of the road that you can use for a braking marker. The overhead Chamonix sign is a good reference point for faster AWD cars. From the outside, cut in and downshift to second gear. The turn can be taken at speeds of 50 to 60 mph, so it's not that slow. However, you won't be able to power out at all because it's quickly followed by a nasty decreasing-radius sweeper, so stay inside even as you're clearing the bend.

Turn 15: This 180-degree sweeper is tricky because it tightens in two parts. The first half is relatively tame, and since you're already at slower speeds from turn 14, only moderate braking is required before the turn-in. From the outside, cut into the bend, pointing your car at the halfway point of the corner. Your initial speed will be around 50 mph, but at the two-thirds mark you'll need to either blip the brakes or keep your foot off the gas, dropping to 40 mph. As you near the end, the turn tightens a bit more. As long as you're riding along the inside, there shouldn't be too much drama, though. Since the road is flat, you can see the change in radius ahead of time.

Turn 16: You're almost out of this slow section, but you'll still have to contend with this 90-degree right. Since you haven't had a chance to accelerate out, very little braking is necessary here. From the outside, cut diagonally across the road to hit the apex, then briefly power out so that you're near the center of the lane—you'll need to drift outside a bit for the subsequent right.

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Turns 17, 18: Past this right you'll finally be able to power out. The initial turn in will be at about 50 to 60 mph, and no braking will be needed. Past the halfway point, you can mash the throttle, but keep on the right side. From there you'll gently sweep to the left for a mild left-hander.

Turn 19: As you pick up some speed and climb a hill, there's a pretty tame right-hander. Nevertheless, you'll need to blip the brakes and drop down to about 90 mph. Ride along the inside of the corner, applying the gas as you exit. Since the road briefly climbs up and then down past the bend, it's easy to understeer and run into the outside wall, so be careful.

Turn 20: Yet another right-hander, though this one lacks any rude surprises. From the outside, slow down to third gear and turn in. With the slight decline and bank, you'll be able to power out about halfway through the corner to a small straight.

Turn 21: This moderate right is complicated by a hill just before it, making it a semi-blind turn. Once you reach the crest on the straight, be prepared to hit the brakes. Drop down to third and cut into the inside. Since the road seems slightly off-camber here, it's easy to fall out to the outside if you hit the gas, so exercise restraint. You'll want to stay on the inside throughout to set up for the upcoming left.

Turn 22: Your success at this corner depends on the racing line you took through the previous turn. From the outside, you should be able to cut in at third gear, then power out once you're two-thirds through the turn. Since the road is narrow here, you won't have much runoff space. Punch the gas early and you'll be bouncing off the outlying railing.

Turns 23, 24: Following a mini-straight, you'll contend with two left-handed sweepers, both similar in speed. For the first turn, start braking from the outside, drop down to third gear and cut into the inside. The first bend is slightly faster than the second, allowing you to carry speeds of 70 mph. Power out about two-thirds of the way through, which will push your car to the outside and set you up for the last left. For the final bend, you'll need to slow and drop down to second gear, maintaining speeds between 50 and 60 mph. Hit the gas on exiting to cross the finish line.

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Circuit de la Sarthe

Tuning Guide: Since this course is all about speed, you'll need to optimize your gearing so that you're never bouncing off the limiter on those straights. Set your gearing so that you reach the maximum speed just as you hit each chicane. That way, you're not needlessly hurting acceleration by making the gears too tall. Avoid excessive camber, especially for longer races, or else you'll be changing tires more frequently. This track does have its share of little bumps on the straight, so don't have a stiff suspension or drop your car really low—doing either can cause instability at speeds more than 180 mph.

Recommended Car: AWD or RWD cars with high top speeds, high-speed stability.

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Turn 1: Following a gentle right bend, you'll face a slight right kink that'll require you to either tap the brakes lightly or let off the gas pedal. Have your foot hovering over the brake pedal though, because ...

Turn 2: Immediately following the mild turn is a hard left in a corkscrew, which will have you braking right after getting into the first turn. Delay and you'll eat sand in a large run-off area. Don't accelerate much, because you'll have to cut back to the right soon after—let off the gas as soon as you start to turn back right and hit the accelerator again only after hitting the second apex. You will have plenty of run-off space here, but don't stray past the curb into the green bar on the left because you'll have difficulty setting up for the wavy turns ahead. You'll want to take those mostly at full speed.

Turn 3: After a series of wavy bends, you'll have a moderate left turn, followed by a right. You can't mash the pedal here without banging into the guard rails to the right, as there's not much room in the narrow road.

There's plenty of runoff room, but don't get lazy.

Turn 4: The next turn is a relatively quick right with lots of room. You'll probably need to drop a gear or two to take this bend. And now you're in one of the longest straights of any track.

Straight 1: This is where you'll really be picking up speed. If there's an opponent you're following closely, be sure to stay behind him to draft. Being on his tail means you face less drag, which means you'll accelerate quicker. Avoid erratic motions that'll hurt your speed.

Turn 5: Turn 5 has a pretty straightforward, slam-the-brakes-then-turn path at the onset. Since you've picked up quite a bit of speed at this point, you'll need plenty of room to slow down, and it'll be difficult to find a braking reference since it might be quite a distance away from the first sign (a 200 m marker). After turning right, you'll have another quick left, so resist the urge to hit the gas—you'll probably have to tap the brakes here or let off the throttle.

The right bend back to another long straight is a mild one, so you can aggressively mash the throttle after clearing the left-hander. Keep on the pedal through the straight.

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Straight 2: This straight is similar to the first—the straighter your line, the faster you'll be. Even if somebody is trying to pass from behind, avoid erratic motions, which will slow you down; even if you manage to cut that person off, you risk dropping your speed to the point where others can capitalize on the opportunity.

Turn 6: This chicane is basically identical to the previous one, except it's flipped the other way. From the right side, give yourself plenty of room to brake, then cut into the left. Ease up on the throttle until you've cleared the apex for the right-hander, and then punch the throttle.

Turn 7: The back straight finally comes to an end as you pass the crest of a hill. Given that you've piled on speed again, this turn will need plenty of time for braking. The markers are set quite a distance apart, so you'll have to time your braking by counting the seconds after crossing the 200 or 100 marker. If you're going around 180 to 200 mph, it might even be past the 100 marker, and in that case you can use the fixture hanging to the side as a reference point. Turn 7 is actually two sets of turns, too. The first is a very mild kink that can still be taken at relatively high speeds. From the left side, brake to drop down a gear, maybe two (around fourth gear), then turn while letting off the brakes. You'll immediately start braking again for the very slow and sharp turn. The apex is late on this, and you don't want to punch the throttle too soon. Afterward, you'll hit another longish straight. You'll notice here that the asphalt narrows—keep that in mind for the next turn because you won't be able to power out as quick.

Turn 8: After slowing down a bit, you'll want to turn in right here.

This pair of turns requires a similar strategy to the last. For the initial right-handed kink, brake enough to drop down a gear or two, then turn in while keeping off the gas. Once you're past the turn, immediately brake hard again for the tighter, left-hander.

The inside curb here is flat and can be driven over for the ideal apex. Again, with the narrower road and no runoff space, you have to hold back on the throttle until you've pretty much cleared the whole turn.

The left-hander will have you going deep into the inside.

Turn 9: A similar right-angled turn as the last. The apex is around the middle; again hold off on the throttle until you've pretty much cleared the corner. The left side has a wall immediately adjacent to the track, so there's not much room for error.

Turn 10: You've again had some time to gain speed for this loopy set of S-curves. The initial bend and the last bend are the tightest, and will require the biggest drop in speed. Slow down to at least fourth gear, then turn while letting off the gas. Hug the inside, getting as close as you can to the curb. Establish a rhythm for these relatively consistent curves—as you round the turn, punch the accelerator again, and repeat.

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Turns 11, 12: As you approach the grandstands and the start of the track, you'll encounter two chicanes in quick succession. The first chicane is milder, and you'll drop down to maybe third to tackle the turns. Because the next chicane quickly follows, don't accelerate too much—if you drift to the outside, you'll be in a very poor position for the next set of turns, costing you a chunk of time. After clearing the easier chicane, quickly go back to the right side, then brake hard. This will make you drop down to second gear. Cut across the apexes of both bends.

The last bend you can cheat—er, clip quite a bit since the area immediately outside the track is paved. Since it's an incline, you'll have more breathing room to power out quicker.

Although not exactly sportsmanlike, you could just jump over the curb to your right with reckless aplomb.

NIGHT RACING

Circuit de la Sarthe is among the few tracks that feature day and night cycles. Driving close to 200 mph in near pitch-black conditions can be terrifying—but there are some ways to work around it. First, it's important that your gamma settings on your TV or monitor aren't too low. Dark settings on your TV can make your already-dim visibility even worse. Also, having the Driving Line on greatly helps with seeing the road ahead (almost to the point of cheating), because unlike the road, it's somewhat lit independently.

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Circuit de la Sarthe 2005 (No Chicane)

Tuning Guide: This is the ultimate high-speed test. No other real-life course comes close to the venerable Mulsanne straight—a seemingly endless stretch that fries engines and brings suspension components to their knees. Although the chicane is used for all events now, in the game you can enjoy more than three miles of unadulterated speed. It comes with a price, though; bumpy roads and slight kinks can make the difference between a podium finish and terrible defeat. Suspension settings should be soft, and ride height raised up—and put lots of downforce front and rear.

Recommended Car: Top-end performance cars, MR or AWD.

NOTE: The 2009 layout and the 2005 are almost identical, and since the 2009 is the more commonly used track, refer to the 2009 Circuit de la Sarthe guides for the turn-by-turn guide as well as the Mulsanne straight. Here we will cover differences between the 2009 and 2005 circuits.

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Turn 1: Refer to the two differences covered in the Circuit de la Sarthe 2005 (chicane) section. Here are additional differences between the 2005 and 2009 (which apply to both the chicane and no-chicane versions). The 2005 course has much less runoff space, especially on the inside. The 2009 course has plenty of space, and given that it's paved, can even be crossed over (but as it is off-camber, there likely won't be much time saved by cutting through).

Turn 2: Nearing the end of the race, you face a couple of broad sweepers, and this is were the differences between the 2009 and 2005 layouts may have more impact. The runoff in 2005 is a short strip of curb followed by grass; in 2009, the area has been paved over. Hence, in the 2005 course, there's a little less margin for error, although if you keep to the roads you won't feel any difference.

SUSPENSION TUNING BASICS: SWAY BARS

In addition to the shocks and springs covered previously, sway bars are another key component to suspension tuning, and control the rolling motion of the car. Beginner tuners tend to think "less roll is better," which is true only to a certain point; thicker sway bars prevent roll, but do so by preventing weight transfer. Excessive roll resistance puts most of the weight on one side, thereby under-working the inner tires. Sway bars are most felt in a consistent turn. Thicker fronts (or smaller rears) promote understeer; smaller fronts and thicker rears promote oversteer.

People who are just starting out modding their car tend to like tweaking the sway bars first, especially making the rear sway thicker (promoting oversteer). But when tuning the suspension, it's best to start with the shocks and springs, then move to sway bars. If your car was understeering at the front, thicker rear sways might counter the understeer, but not actually fix the front pushing; the front could still pushing at the limit while the rear is simply rotating more. Softer front sways promote oversteer, but at the expense of responsiveness when turning in. If you're new to this, make only minor changes at the beginning. (And remember: Slightly stiffer rears never seems to hurt on FWD cars.)

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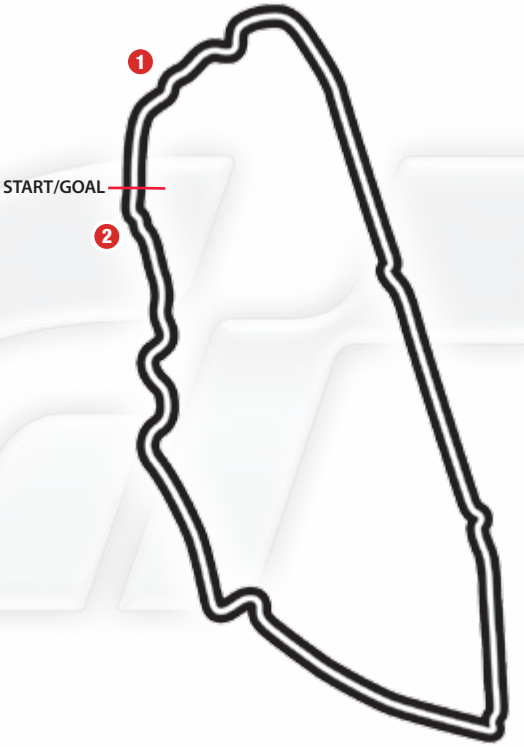
Circuit de la Sarthe 2005

Tuning Guide: Given the course's history of putting cars to their high-speed limits, this track is all about extracting the most speed from your car—and testing its stability. Even with the chicanes added, you can easily top your rev limiter in your last gear with some cars. Consequently, you should tweak the gearing so that you reach your top speed right as you brake for the first chicane. The road has a reputation for being rough, especially on the high-speed Mulsanne straight. Keep your suspension on the soft side, and don't drop your car down too low—bottom out at 200 mph and terrible things can happen.

Recommended Car: Top-end performance cars, MR or AWD.



NOTE: Since the 2009 layout and the 2005 are so similar, and since the 2009 is the more commonly used track, refer to the 2009 guide for the turn-by-turn guide. This will cover some of the notable differences.

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Turn 1: Much of the differences between 2009 and 2005 pertain to what's not on the track. The runoff space in the old track has a squared off barrier to the right, whereas the 2009 track is all paved and brightly colored. The side effect to this change is that the unscrupulous can cut across here in 2009, quite shamelessly. It may disqualify you for Time Attack runs, but in a race against others, almost anything goes. Similar changes can be seen in other bends, such as the sharp right before the Mulsanne straight.

Final Turn: This one is worth mentioning, because it's an egregious opportunity to cut across. The left screenshot is 2005, the right, 2009. Note how in 2009 the right side of the chicane is completely paved, which allows cars to barrel through. No such luck for cheaters in 2005, where there's grass and a closer wall.

SUSPENSION TUNING BASICS: SHOCKS AND SPRINGS

What does a "stiff" suspension mean exactly? Stiff and soft suspension refer to how much the shock absorbers and springs control movement. The spring, in short, stores the energy when compressed. Without shocks, it just releases the energy, causing the car to bounce up and down. Shocks work in two ways: bump (compression) and rebound. Bump settings determine how much the shock resists (or slows) the springs from compressing, while rebound determines the speed in which it returns back to normal.

Depending on the car, the track, your personal preference, there's a sweet spot in suspension tuning. If it's too soft, the motions are too uncontrolled, which hurts your cornering ability. If the motions are too stiff, then the car is resisting too much, causing the vehicle to become skittish. Depending on the balance between front and rear, you can dramatically change how your car handles. For example, if your front-wheel drive ride understeers too much out of the factory, much of that can be addressed by increasing rear bump damping, which resists weight transferring to the rear as you floor it out of a corner. Shocks and springs doesn't just impact handling and cornering, either. High bump settings up front, for example, resist brake dive. Stiffer springs and shocks also resist body motion.

When tweaking either shocks or springs, you should always do the other as well. If you're making the rear springs stiffer than the front, then similar tweaks should be done to the shocks to complement the spring rate.

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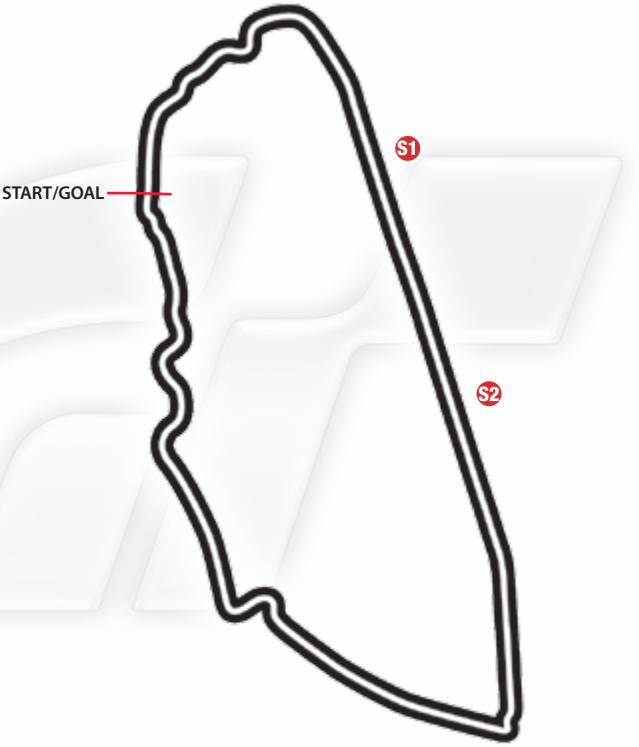
Circuit de la Sarthe 2009 (No Chicane)



Tuning Guide: The Mulsanne straight on Circuit de la Sarthe dwarfs all other real-world tracks, making the Nürburgring Nordschleife home straight look like a short track by comparison. Having the right gear ratios is key here, and you never want to bounce off your rev limiter. If you're competing with others, you might even leave extra room with tall gearing, taking advantage of drafting to catapult your ride to victory. As with the other Circuit de la Sarthe variants, have a soft suspension setup and a raised ride height—you'll especially need it for this version.

Recommended Car: Prodigiously high horsepower cars, typically AWD.

NOTE: Given that the no chicane version and the regular version are the same aside from the straight, this section will cover specifically the Mulsanne straight.

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Straight 1: None of the kinks in the Mulsanne straight require hitting the brakes or taking your foot off the gas; however they do call for soft touches with the steering to get the most speed out of the section. This kink is extremely mild; all you'll need to do is barely touch the steering to the right. If you find gentle, consistent inputs to be difficult on the analog stick, then lightly tap the analog stick repeatedly to the right, nudging the car on the right trajectory.

Straight 2: Just past where the second chicane would be is this small right-hander. The kink may not look like much, but when traveling at speeds exceeding 200 mph it can still make a driver sweat. Since the turn comes very quickly at these speeds, you'll need to start turning in right as you see it on the horizon. There's a very minor crest leading into the bend, which will provide a bit more resistance as you turn. Jerking the steering hard will accomplish the task just the same, but with a greater loss of speed.

TIP:

Not all straights are the same. On the left side of this section just past the chicane, it's especially bumpy. The higher your speeds, the more dangerous such sections become.

TUNING BASICS: BRAKES

When seeing giant cross-drilled disc brakes with mammoth brake calipers on a high-performance car, most will undoubtedly think, "that's got some serious stopping power." But the reality is that even your average grocery-getter car has enough braking power: If you can slam the brakes on your economy car and lock the tires (or get the ABS to activate), you're generating all the braking power that you need.

The purpose of aftermarket braking upgrades is mainly to provide braking consistency, efficiency, and balance, not braking power. Many cars coming out of the factory go overboard on front brake bias for general safety reasons, and not necessarily for the best stopping distance. Hence, tweaking brake bias on your car can improve braking distances. Giant brake rotors serve to dissipate heat quicker, thereby ensuring that brakes don't fade over prolonged use (thankfully, brake fading is not something you'll have to worry about in this game). Simply buying and installing the upgrades may provide minor benefits with stopping distance, but unless you tweak the settings you won't get much out of your purchase. Take these facts into consideration when pondering whether to drop your hard-earned cash on brake upgrades.

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Circuito de Madrid

Tuning Guide: With the track's long straights, you'll want a fast-accelerating ride. Because the track has a lot of straights and hard braking, you don't want to have much negative camber here. Turns tend to be at low speeds, so adjust the suspension accordingly.

Recommended Car: Fast-accelerating, fast-braking cars, RWD or AWD.

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Turn 1: There are actually three turns in this hook-like turn. The first is a moderate right, which will have you dropping gears from the speed you picked up on the initial straightaway. The second is a sharper turn that will require you to drop into even lower gears, followed by a third turn.

Since the third turn follows in quick succession with the second and is a similar radius, you won't need much braking at this point and can just turn hard. As you're clearing the bend, start accelerating early because an extended straight is up ahead.

Turn 2: Don't let all those red arrows in this narrow alleyway fool you—it's a pretty mellow turn and you probably don't need to let off the gas at all. Turn in a little early and anticipate the turn, which will give you more room for speed through the kink.

Turn 3: This turn is initially similar to turn 1. First you'll have to brake for the right-hander, and as you're turning into the corner, you'll need to be prepared to brake again before snapping back to the left, as shown in the screenshot.

Turn 4: As you approach the larger U-shaped sweeper, be careful not to carry too much speed, as you'll need to brake and snap back to the right again. When traversing the U, be gentle on the throttle because it's a fairly constant turn. The apex of the turn is late—at the 100 marker sign—and you'll want to drop enough speed so that you can clip the curb. If you step on the gas too early you'll find yourself drifting to the outside, which will slow you down and set you up poorly for the fast-approaching right.

Turn 5: This right-hander requires you to slow down more than you might expect. From the left side of the lane, cut toward the apex, clipping the curb on the inside of the 90-degree right turn. Accelerate out as you pass the apex. If you're too quick on the pedal going out, you'll bang into the railing on the side, which is very close to the track.

Turn 6: A pretty easy corner, you can mostly power through this one, although you will need to let off the gas some if you find yourself going wide. Either way, very minimal or no braking is needed.

The better you time the turn, the less you'll need to let off the gas.

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Turn 7: Toward the tail end of this track is a loopy hairpin. There's a solid barrier at the beginning of this turn, so if you're slow on the brakes you'll slam into the barrier dead-on, leaving you with a seriously thrashed car (if damage modeling is on). To take this as quickly as possible, you don't want to do all the braking before you turn. The key to this is knowing when to start turning in for the mini-kink. Stay on the outside of the lane and turn your car slightly to the right so that you're facing the start of the loop head on.

Tilt slightly toward the right before hitting the brakes.

From there, slam the brakes so that you've reduced your speed enough to traverse through the loop. Again, keep a tight turn here. If your turn radius is getting too close to the inside, apply some throttle. If you're going wide, then let off. There's a mini-apex at the 100 marker sign, where you'll cut close to the curb, then start accelerating out.

Cutting as close as you can to the wall makes the radius of this chicane that much more manageable.

Turn 8: The trick to the final turn is dropping down enough in speed so that you can keep your line tight and small around the brutal chicane. Cut across both turns by going over the curbs a bit. This allows you to get on the gas sooner out of the corner, at a slight cost of speed through the turns. This may be less viable if your car is too low, or if you have a stiffer suspension, but given that you're driving at a lower speed, you should have more control, too.

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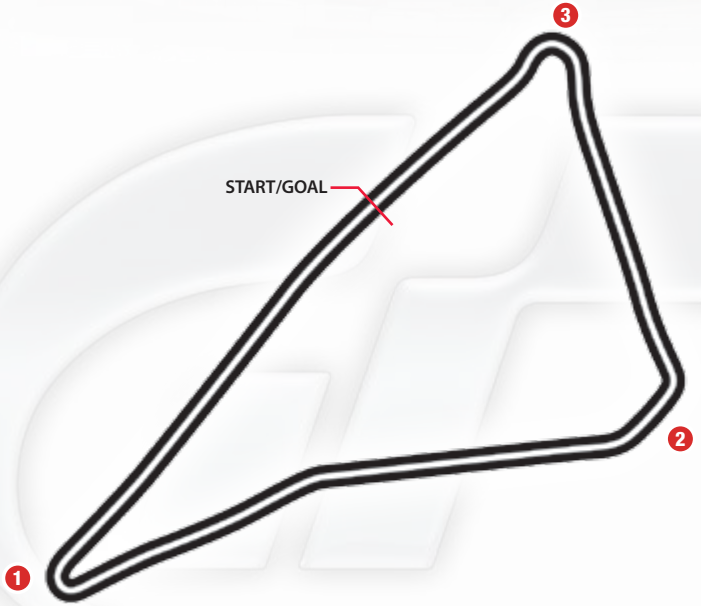
Circuito de Madrid—Short Course

Tuning Guide: This course will have even the most high-end cars going up to 160 mph, so the gear ratios can be medium-close. Long straights and heavy braking mean camber isn't too helpful. The majority of the course consists of straights, so adjust downforce for high-speed stability.

Recommended Car: AWD cars can be advantageous with their great launch and acceleration.



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Turn 1: The first bend is a hard-turning hairpin where it's easy to go too wide. Part of the challenge is that the road shifts from a wide, four-lane road to a narrow two-lane one. Hence, when traversing the bend at around 40 mph, you cannot hit the gas until late, or else you'll crash into the steel railing. Take your time and resist pushing the throttle until you're at least two-thirds of the way through. This will be followed by a small kink that requires no letting off the gas.

Turn 2: After picking some speed, you'll come cross a double left-hand turn. The first is quicker, and forces you to slow down to fourth gear. Use the overhead sign as reference for your braking point; with faster cars it'll be just around the 100 mark. In between the first and second left there is some time to brake.

The Driving Line may suggest dropping down two gears for the second left-hander, but very often you'll need to drop down only one, to third gear. Punch the accelerator when you're roughly two-thirds of the way through the second bend. Given that the road is back to four lanes here, you might be able to power out earlier.

Avoid hitting the curb on your right, which will reduce the effectiveness of your brakes if you drive over it.

Turn 3: The final corner is about as slow as turn 1. There are many roadside landmarks you can use for your braking point, so choose the one that's the best (like the bus stop just beyond the right-side railing, for example). Be sure to brake while traveling in a straight line, so position yourself before the turn accordingly. When navigating the inside of the bend, it's important to not power out too quickly. The road here narrows once again to two lanes coming out of the corner, which means you'll have limited space. Hit the throttle right past the apex, which is in the middle.

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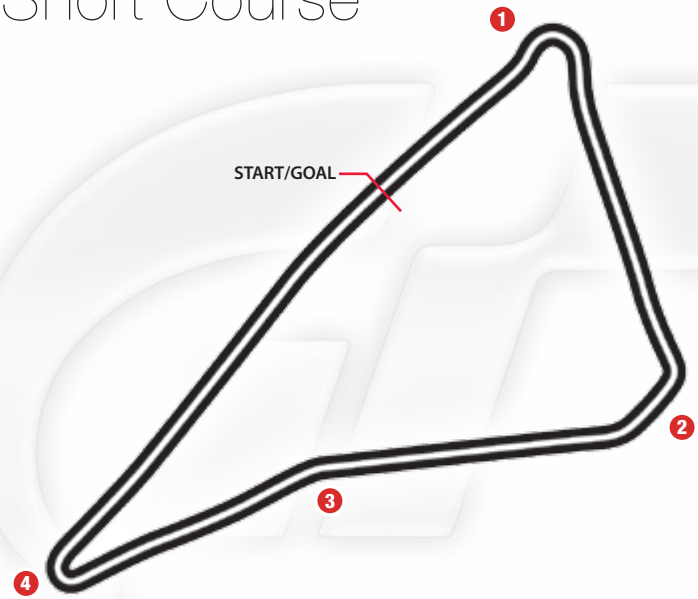
Circuito de Madrid—Short Course (Reverse)

Tuning Guide: Like the forward version of the short, this caters to fast-accelerating cars, but is less about top speed. Since you'll never approach speeds of 200 mph, the gear ratios should be tweaked to medium-close. Ideally, your car will be reaching the rev limiter when traversing across the whole home straight. High-speed stability might be an issue for the kink past turn 2, so make sure your setup isn't prone to heavy understeer.

Recommended Car: AWD cars with an emphasis on lightness over brute horsepower.



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Turn 1: Compared to the forward course, this turn is slightly more difficult at the beginning, but easier at the end. The turn is behind a slight kink—and with most cars you can brush the edge of the curb without adjusting for the slight left at all. Just be sure you never clip the curb or your car could hop and ruin your braking distance. Since the road opens up to four lanes, you'll have plenty of room to throttle out—punch the gas at the turn's midpoint.

Turn 2: For the reverse, this pair of turns becomes an increasing-radius turn, taken in parts. The key is simply to slow down to the correct speed for the first corner. From the outside, drop down to third gear beforebraking. It'll feel like a slight uphill going into this first apex, and you can in aggressively, clipping the curb with the inside tires. After passing the first bend, floor it through the second bend, letting off the gas if necessary. But since the road is still wide here, there's plenty of margin for error.

Turn 3: Maneuvering through this kink in the normal direction requires no fancy moves. But going in the opposite direction is much more problematic. For one thing, you've got more speed coming in from this direction. Second, the turn is right on the crest of a hill, the worst place for a high-speed bend. As you hit the crest your car will lighten, leading your ride to understeer substantially. To counter that, you'll need to turn in early, and turn hard. Start turning in before you hit the crest, and even before the road bends, using the screenshot as a reference.

Turn 4: The final bend is pretty much the same as it is when going forward. Both sides of the turn are two-lane roads, which means you won't have a lot of space to power out. Use the overhead sign as a braking marker. With faster cars, the braking point is before the 100 marker sign. Hit the brakes in a straight line, cutting in only after you let go of the brakes. Since the railing is pretty close to the inside curb, don't try clipping the curb at all. Ride along the inside, powering out when you have traversed about two-thirds of the bend. The home straight is up ahead, and you'll want to get the timing perfect on turn 4, as it will impact your lap time significantly.

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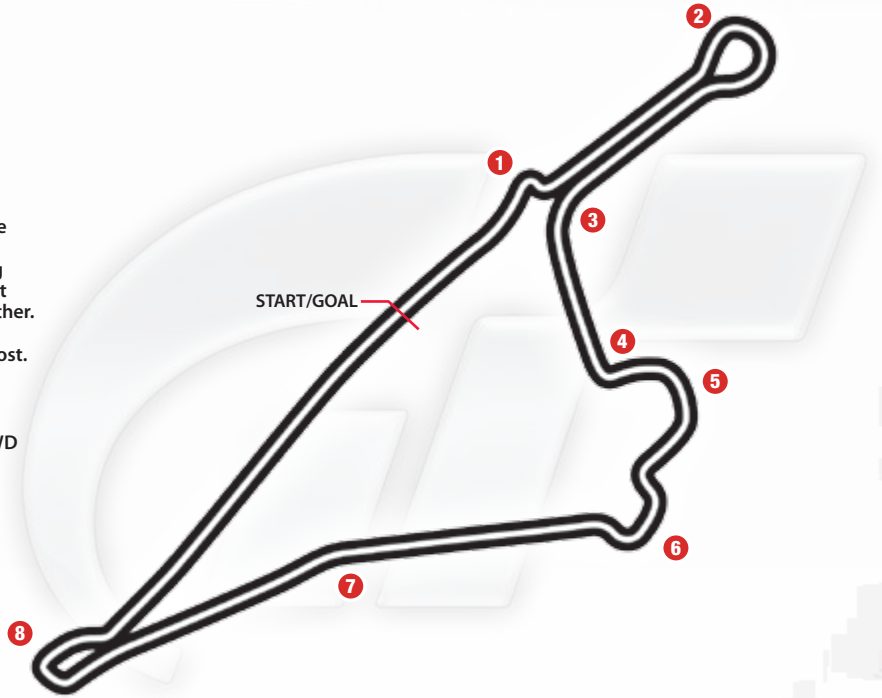
Circuito de Madrid (Reverse)

Tuning Guide: The tuning philosophy will be the same here as for the forward course—not lots of negative camber due to the extensive braking and accelerating required here. The high speeds are mainly in a straight line, so you probably don't need lots of downforce, either. The track doesn't extend long enough for really high speeds—you're looking at the 160 mph ballpark at most. So don't have tall gearing here.

Recommended Car: Well-balanced, high-end MR cars are ideal. For those on a lower budget, FR cars and AWD would work, too.



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Turn 1: A lot of corners can be cut on this chicane, literally. The Driving Line suggests an ideal line only if you want to avoid the curbs entirely. Going over the curbs at low speeds won't upset most cars, and you won't even be penalized on it in Time Attack mode, so there's nothing to lose by cutting corners. Contrary to what the game suggests, stay in the center of the road and brake late. You'll be slightly diagonal relative to the road, aiming for the edge of the left curb just before it bends. Don't hit the left curb, though, because you'll want to be braking hard—rather, get as close as you can to it. Unlike the Driving Line suggestion, you'll only be braking once; the Driving Line suggests braking, letting off, turning, then braking, then turning, which is needlessly complex.

Drop down to the mid- to low 40s in speed, and cut across the inside curbs, as shown in the screenshot. Don't power out until you've steered right enough to clear the barrier straight ahead. If done correctly, you'll not only be making better time, but also expending less effort.

Turn 2: This teardrop turn is harder than it looks, because it changes from a decreasing-radius turn back to increasing. The sharpest turn is at the middle, and the ends are quicker. Hence, when braking initially to second, you will want to use very little throttle as you navigate the inside of the turn—allowing your car to naturally drop in speed. Around the three-fourths mark in the turn, power out.

Turn 3: In spite of what the Driving Line may suggest, you probably won't need to drop down a gear for this sweeping left-hander. But you will need to brake a little, or even just let off the throttle through the bend. You will go wide and hit the wall if you just lead-foot the whole bend, though.

Turn 4: Since you've carried a lot of speed through the last turn, you'll be on the brakes pretty quickly here. Drop down to second, cutting in early and aggressively getting close to the apex. It's easy to overshoot this sharp left-hander, so be ready. Once your car is past the apex you can get on the gas, but you'll be slowing down again for the sweeper very soon.

Turn 5: Like the teardrop turn before, the middle section of this right-hand sweeper is the tightest. Ease into the middle at second gear, modulating the throttle so that you don't go wide. You don't want to power out early because a sharp left-hander lies immediately beyond this bend. Hit the gas when you're almost completely through, positioning yourself in the center of the road upon exit.

Turn 6: This smaller sweeper is technically two bends, with the middle being the tightest. Hug the inside in second gear. Then, power out and around as you hit the middle of the corner.

Turn 7: The little left-handed kink is the same as the reverse mini course, and the same principle applies—turn in and anticipate the turn before you hit the crest—otherwise you'll encounter heavy understeer and risk hitting the railing on the right.

Turn 8: This increasing-radius turn is actually three bends; the first two are the tightest. Since you've had lots of time to gain speed, give yourself ample time to slow down. The braking point will usually be after the 100 marker sign overhead. Cut in at second gear, maintaining consistent throttle to create a consistent arc. The apex is late, and is just beyond the second bend, as the screenshot shows.

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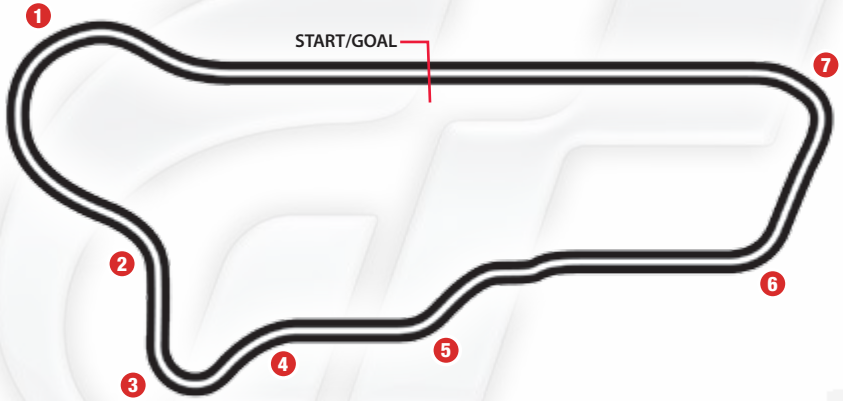
Clubman Stage Route 5

Tuning Guide: Acceleration is the name of the game for this course. However, the course itself is short and there won't be much time spent in the triple-digit speeds. Keep the gearing shorter, ensuring that you won't have lots of RPM left to hit the limiter at top gear. Downforce will also be helpful, though with only one big straight you don't need to go all out. Since the road is relatively smooth, you can also have a tighter suspension setup.

Recommended Car: Fast FR cars tend to be in their element here.



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Turn 1: Turn 1 is easily one of the most difficult turns in the course, mainly because it comes after a long straight. It's very easy to overshoot this and the downhill before the sweeper only makes braking or turning more of a challenge. The braking point is before entering the tunnel—wait until you enter and you'll slam into the outside. Stay along the inside of the bend throughout, and even when exiting the turn you'll still want to stay inside. The upcoming turn will require you to cut in from the left, and if you power out, you'll drift off to the right.

Turn 2: This turn's difficulty depends heavily on how you set up your racing line from the previous bend. It's a gradual turn, so you probably won't be dropping down in gears; nevertheless, you will need to do a little braking to navigate this corner.

Turns 3, 4: This sweeper is an increasing-radius turn, meaning the turn is tight at the beginning. Drop down to second gear, powering out late so that you don't drift off to the right. Toward the latter half, the road will start to climb, giving your car a slight tendency to push. Just floor it through the right-hander that immediately follows since you haven't had much time to gain speed.

Turn 5: This bend is the same angle as the last, except you've had some time to build speed. You may need to momentarily lift your foot off the gas to follow your racing line.

Turn 6: Number 6 is a moderate left-hander that will have you brake down to third gear. Use the lampposts on your right as the braking marker. Due to the incline, it's easy to over-brake on this corner. Hit the brakes lightly, then quickly power out, even before the apex.

Turn 7: The final bend is near the elevation peak of the course. It slopes uphill throughout the turn, cresting at the start of the straight. Because of the slight bank you can punch the throttle quickly, just like the last bend. Getting the exit down is critical to carry lots of speed through the home straight.

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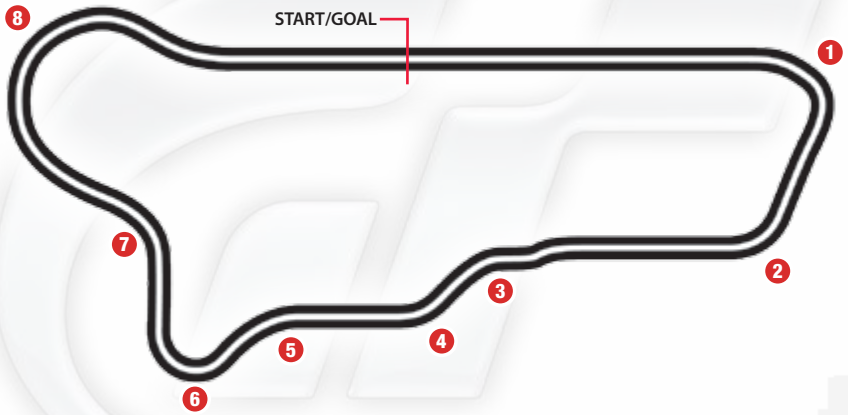
Clubman Stage Route 5 (Reverse)

Tuning Guide: The reverse version isn't too different than the forward, although it may be slightly easier without having to madly brake for the complex sweeper in the forward version of turn 1. There's a lot of accelerating on this course, and with the prominent straight, you'll want to optimize your gearing so that you max out in speed right before the initial bend. Since the corners come in quick succession, tune your suspension so that it's very responsive in the quick transitions. Put some toe-in on the front for a crisp, initial turn-in, and use stiff sway bars to ensure that your car responds to your inputs promptly.

Recommended Car: FR cars with an emphasis on acceleration.



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Turn 1: You'll be coming from a long straight if it's a running start or if you're coming from a previous lap, so give yourself plenty of time to brake. From the mid-left side of the lane, hit the brakes. Then, gradually go down to around 55 mph, riding along the inside. The road drastically narrows here, so you can't power out that early.

Turn 2: The second hill on your descent is a substantially faster right-hander, and you'll be taking the bend in third gear. With the bank and the descent, the nose of you car will be responsive, and you can surprisingly power through a lot of the turn. Past this turn is a mini straight, which allows you to gain some speed.

Turn 3: Immediately past a minor kink in the road (where it converges with the Special Stage Route 5 course) is a pair of quick bends. The first will require you to moderately apply the brakes. Let off the brakes and cut in, briefly powering as you hit the apex for this left-hander. You can't keep your foot on the accelerator for long, though, or you won't have the room to cut inside for the next right-hander, forcing you to drop in speed. Instead, aim to be in the middle of the lane as you power out of the first left.

TIP: Cars come equipped with high beams, and the extra visibility comes in handy for night courses such as these—especially when climbing uphill.

Turn 4: The right-hander comes right after Turn 3. It's the same angle as the last turn, so your speed through the corner will be similar. Let off the throttle before cutting in and as you across the apex, power out.

Turn 5: This next bend is exactly like the last turns in its angle, but because it's closely followed by a tight sweeper, you can't have the same speeds through the turn. Since you haven't had much time to gain speed, you'll hit the brakes briefly. As you're turning, let off the throttle and avoid hitting the gas at all as you round the blind corner. At the apex, start braking for the fast-approaching sweeper and drop down to second gear.

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Turn 6: When going in reverse, this tight sweeper is essentially an increasing-radius turn, meaning you can power out a lot quicker than in the forward version of this track. Nevertheless, on entry you really must kill your speed while staying in second gear. About midway through the corner, you can power out and drift to the middle for the next bend.

Turn 7: Since you've barely had time to power out from the last turn, this will likely only need light braking. You can cut the apex pretty aggressively here, and go across the striped white lines on the pavement to your left. Power out as you cross the apex, but don't drift to the outside edge because the final turn is right in front of you.

Turn 8: Unlike the forward direction, this requires a lot less work to turn in. That said, the bend starts immediately as you enter the tunnel, in contrast to the standard direction. Slow down to the appropriate speed *before* you enter the tunnel and not after. Otherwise, you'll run wide for the first half of the sweeper and compromise your lap time. Hit the throttle about two-thirds of the way through because the bend eases up out of the tunnel. The kink at the end of the tunnel causes much heartache going forward, but with the reverse track you can simply power through.

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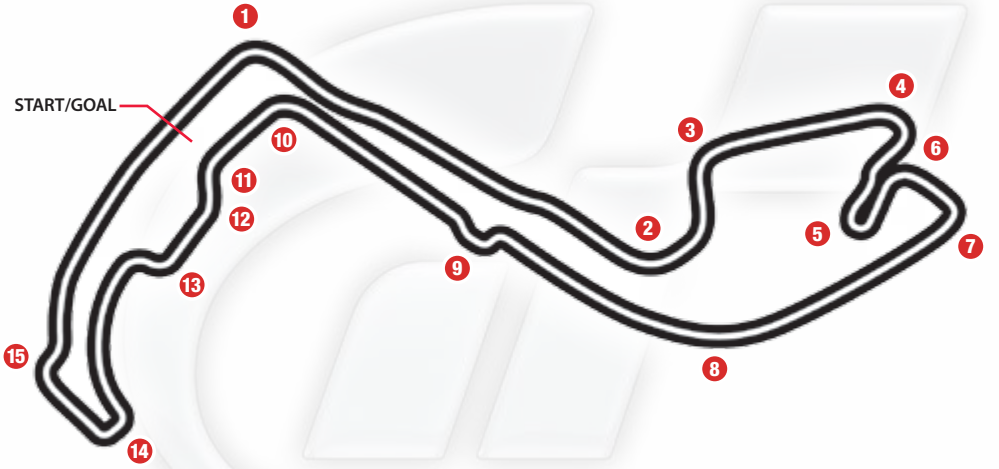
Côte d'Azur

Tuning Guide: Due to windy roads and strategically placed chicanes, there's little opportunity to gain speed on this course—most cars will top out at roughly 120 mph. Thus you'll want your gear ratios to be very close to ensure that you maximize acceleration at the cost of top-end speed. Low-speed maneuverability is vital here, and you'll need to make sure your car has a crisp turn-in.

Recommended Car: Lightweight, fast-accelerating MR.



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Turn 1: When you're eyeballing the map, turn 1 doesn't look like that slow of a bend—but because of the narrow streets and the need to quickly position yourself for the subsequent turn, you'll have to slow down to second gear here. In addition, the incline may make your car reluctant to turn in. From the outside, cut in to the inside, making sure you aggressively clip the apex. Since the road isn't very wide, clipping the apex becomes that much more important.

Hug the inside even when coming out of the corner, or else you'll be in a bad spot for the next bend.

Turn 2: After navigating some mild kinks in the road, you'll come to a left-handed sweeper. It's still on an incline, but is also at a blind crest. Immediately before the turn is a slight right-handed kink and it's essential you nudge your car to the left, ensuring that you'll turn in from the outside. The braking point will be before you reach the crest of the hill. Slow down to third gear, and let off the throttle while turning, allowing the incline to naturally bleed your speed. Your inclination will be to start powering out just as you start clearing the turn, but don't—you need to stay on the left side for the sharp right-hander ahead.

Turn 3: If you've stayed on the inside for the last turn, you should be on the left side of the road, which sets you up for this quick right. Whereas turn 2 was slightly off camber, turn 3 is banked and on an incline, so your car will feel peppier here. With the blip of the brakes, drop down to second gear, then cut in. Get as close as you can to the curb without actually touching it. You'll be able to power out as soon as you pass the apex.

Turn 4: Past turn 3 you'll be encountering the steepest straight decline in the course. Your joyous binge of accelerating here will be short-lived, though, because there's a hairpin below. And because of the descent down, your braking distance will be substantially longer, so you'll need to plan ahead and brake. Ideally, you'll need to drop to around 40 mph just as you start making the bend.

Turn 5: The next turn carries the distinction of being one of the slowest road-course turns in the game. You haven't had much time to gain speed from the last corner, but you're still on a downhill so the braking distance will again be longer. The first time you take this turn, you'll likely go in way too hot. From the outside, slam the brakes, dropping down to second gear. Technically it's so slow here that you can even drop to first, but with most cars, in first gear it is trickier to modulate the throttle because of the torque. Stay in second, rounding the turn at a traffic-snarling speed of 25 mph. Because another turn soon follows, you can only power out when you've just about cleared the corner.

TIP: If you're wanting to pass others at turn 5, brake very late. Since the road is narrow, as long as you get the inside they'll have lots of trouble passing you here.

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Turn 6: Here's a deceptively tight left-hander that will reward you for going slow. It's easy to go wide on the apex here, because up until this point, the apex has always been very close to a railing or wall. That's not the case here, and you have lots of space to aggressively clip the apex and ride over the curb. Doing so will allow you to power out quicker. Since you'll want to go wide for the next right-hander, hit the gas as you clip the apex.

Turn 7: By now you're gritting your teeth at how slow all these corners are, and here's yet another crawling right. From the outside, blip the brakes before turning in. The apex is right next to a steel railing, so you'll want to stay off the inside curb, but get as close as you can. Due to the corner's narrowness, the apex will be late here, and you'll want to hold off on the throttle until you're two-thirds through.

Turn 8: As you enter the tunnel, you'll encounter a mild sweeper where you can just power through. This is the fastest part of the course, and if you're behind you'll want to use this opportunity to pass others.

Stay near the curb as much as you can, which will make this chicane a lot easier.

Turn 9: This slow chicane is one of the those make-or-break moments in the race because it's a great opportunity to make good time, but also a chance to fantastically lose the race. The turns come at a bottom of the hill, from the fastest section in the course, so you'll need plenty of room to brake. The timing of your turn-in and your speed (or lack thereof) are vital here. From the outside, drop down to about 50 mph, then cut in as close as you can to the steel railing on the left. Immediately cut back to the right. You cannot carry much speed here, so don't hit the gas. If you go wide you'll risk slamming into the steel railing head on and not make the last bend. Ride over the striped curb slightly, continually moving right until you're able to clear the steel railing on the left-hander. Then power out.

Turn 10: From this point on the road is wider and easier to navigate. Turn 10 is a 90-degree right that can be taken relatively quickly for this course. And it's pretty straightforward. From the outside, brake down to third, cutting into the apex while avoiding the steel rails. Power out as you clear the apex.

Turns 11–13: The next three bends are taken at about the same speed, but are each slightly different. The first left-hander has you brake and turn into the side, dropping down to second gear in the process. Throttle out to drift to the left side of the road. The second right-hander requires you to hit the brakes even at second, and you'll clip the apex going around 40 mph. Hit the accelerator quickly; since you've lost a lot of speed you can simply power through the last left-hander.

Turn 14: The two right-angle turns in quick succession are basically taken as a single hairpin. You'll need to lose plenty of speed before taking this, at least down to 40 mph. Throttle out once you hit the apex—the road is still wide and drifting the outside will help you for the last turn.

Turn 15: The last turn is technically two turns, but with the right racing line you can treat it as one. From the outside, drop down to second gear. Cut into the apex going in the mid-50s. It's essential you don't carry too much speed here, because the faster you go, the more you have to compensate for the kink that immediately follows, forcing you to treat this like a two-turn bend. Stay off the throttle until the path ahead is a straight shot.

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Daytona International Speedway

Tuning Guide: Maximum speed, stability, and downforce are the key areas to focus on for this track. There's no braking and no letting off the gas, so you'll have a fewer parameters to work with. Adjusting downforce so that you're planted to the ground is essential here, and you'll want to tweak the balance between the front and rear so that your car stays relatively neutral throughout. You could give your car a very slight tendency to oversteer, thus offsetting the understeer from coming out of a draft. But your goal here is smooth consistent turns, not drifting.

Recommended Car: Stock cars, any AWD or RWD with high horsepower.

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Turn 1: All three turns in Daytona are so heavily banked that they don't need any modulation of the throttle or braking. Unless your car is poorly set up, you can keep your foot on the accelerator the entire time. But it doesn't mean this track is always easy—keeping a smooth, consistent line is essential, especially if you're running dozens of endurance laps. Shaving even 0.2 seconds or 0.5 seconds off your time can add up to a sizable advantage.

Using the controller, it can be especially hard to keep your turns smooth. Very delicate changes with the steering are required here (a steering wheel peripheral comes especially handy for this course). Avoid sudden jerking of the wheel; you should find a sweet spot that allows you to keep the line without any exaggerated corrections.

The scariest part of this turn comes as you're exiting the corner; the angle of the bank lessens, and you'll need to cut the steering hard to compensate here.

Turn 2: Similar rules apply for this bend. Turn in gently and gradually. You don't want to frantically cut in, or else you'll lose speed at entry. Again, keep a good racing line—the trick to this course is all about steering finesse. Stay to the right of the inner yellow line; if you go past it, the turn becomes flat and is no longer banked, which forces you to slow down dramatically. Again, as you exit the corner, cut the steering hard to the right—your car will feel like it's understeering heavily out of the bend.

Turn 3: Just before the finish line is the last turn. It's not as banked, but it's also not as tight, either. At this point, with a high-end car you are driving at around the 200 mph mark, though, so don't slouch off. Also, cars exit the pit in the midst of this turn, so watch out.

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Daytona Road Course

Tuning Guide: In spite of the infield twists and turns, this track is still relatively high-speed. Keep the gearing taller for the final big home stretch. The curves themselves are mostly taken at moderate to low speeds, and because of the track's smoothness, you can get away with fairly stiff suspension settings.

Recommended Car: High-powered FR, MR, RR, or AWD.

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Turn 1: The first turn is a decreasing-radius turn that requires you to hit the brakes early and hard from the outside. Surprisingly, you can turn in and brake hard due to the banking. Go down to second gear, and as you're rounding the first half, apply no gas so that the car gradually decelerates through the turn. The apex is late, and you'll want to hit the throttle only after you're mostly through the turn.

Turn 2: After a trivial chicane, you'll come across a tight hairpin that will again require you to drop down to second gear. From the outside, brake, then cut in. Don't punch the throttle early or mid-corner or you'll eat the grass on the sidelines. Throttle out two-thirds of the way through the bend.

Turn 3: This left-hand kink seems trivial but in reality requires you to let off the gas and cut in, steering hard to the left. Otherwise, you'll drift outside and into the grass.

Turn 4: Next comes a tight sweeper, almost a hairpin. This is easier than the one in turn 2, but will nonetheless require you to drop to around 50 mph. Similar to other infield corners, hit the throttle late to avoid going too wide.

Turn 5: It's easy to go wide into the bend on this increasing-radius turn. Part of the reason is that the initial bend is off-camber, and you'll have to be careful on the throttle application. To have a fast exit speed, you'll actually take the turn wide, going around the outside. This larger arc allows you to gradually enter the bank back on to the oval carrying more speed. The oval itself will be very easy to traverse; since you just came out of a tight turn, you can just keep your foot on the gas the whole time.

Turns 6, 7: This chicane will kill your speed, but as long as you hit the brakes at the right time, it should be a cakewalk. From the outside, brake and cut in so that you'll cut across the curbs of both bends (see screenshot) and shoot straight through. Power out to go toward the outside, then cut in for the second chicane, which is the same speed as the first. The same strategy works here: Cut across both curbs (which are wide and flat), then turn into the final corner with full speed.

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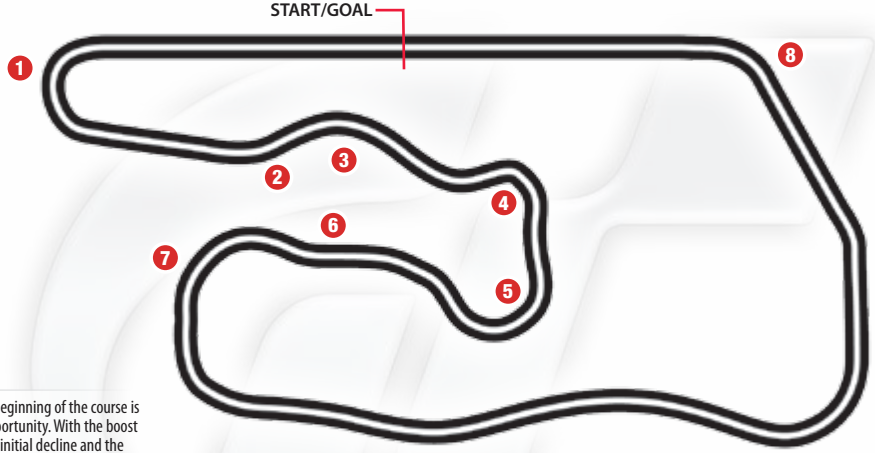
Deep Forest

Tuning Guide: When snaking through dense forests and navigating blind turns, you'll need a balanced suspension setup. If you find the turn-in responsiveness a bit wanting, put a bit of toe-in into the tires. For front-wheel drive cars that have a tendency to understeer and not respond well to the quick bends, you can also dial in a small of toe-out to the rear. Speeds here rarely exceed 160 mph for any car, so keep the transmission gearing relatively close.

Recommended Car: Lightweight FF, FR, MR, or RR cars.



Turn 1: At the very beginning of the course is an excellent passing opportunity. With the boost in acceleration from the initial decline and the hairpin ahead, you can move up at least a couple of spots. Brake late here to get inside. Ideally, if you're running in too hot you can bump into somebody just as they're turning in, thus pushing them out while helping you tuck into the corner. The turn itself will be taken at second gear. Closely ride along the inside without touching the inside curb, powering out two-thirds of the way out of the corner.

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Turns 2–4 : Immediately following is a challenging set of chicanes. The main problem is that they're both blind bends. The first is just beyond the crest of a hill and the second is hidden amidst a cluster of trees. The upside is that for the first you can liberally clip the curb, and almost ride entirely over it.

The second turn really rewards those with softer suspension because you'll be able to aggressively drive over the curb, too. But given the extreme off-camber angle and the height of the bump, stiffly tuned cars won't like the transition back to the asphalt.

Any car can cut the last corner leading into the tunnel. The runoff space beyond the curb is completely paved over, and it's almost encouraging people to drive over it. Don't miss this chance; cutting over here makes the next turn dramatically easier.

Turn 5: After shamelessly driving over the runoff, you'll face this tight right-hander. Drop down to second gear and cut in sharply, barely clipping the apex with your outside tires. The deeper you clip this one, the more off-camber you'll be, so don't get too aggressive here. It's somewhat off-camber out the tunnel; also the roads are narrow, so the apex is late.

Turn 6: Passing through the short tunnel, you'll have a small, increasing-radius sweeper. Slow down to third, rounding the inside without ever touching the grass. Even though the Driving Line may suggest cutting into the grass, that's a bad idea—especially for RWD vehicles.

Turn 7: Exiting out of another tunnel, you'll come across a seemingly tame set of chicanes. Don't slack off here though, because you will have to let off the throttle for the last sweeper that has you swing around 180 degrees. It's easy to go wide here, so cut in early, riding along the inside curb. After you reach the middle of the squarish sweeper, you'll have to let off the throttle to round the latter half of the sweeper, which will carry you back uphill.

Turn 8: After passing two tunnels, you'll come across this slightly banked turn. Get to the left side of the road from within the second tunnel, slightly riding on the rumble strips on the outskirts. Slow down to fourth and turn in, staying on the inside until the late apex. It's a pretty easy turn, but there is a divot in the road, which may upset very stiffly tuned cars.

Turn 9: The last turn is a personal favorite—although it looks like you'll have to drop down a lot in speed, you really don't. The Driving Line may suggest dropping down one more gear than you really need to. With a lot of cars, you won't need to slow down to a different gear at all. Just blip the brakes and cut into the apex. You can slam the gas pedal here very early, even before you hit the apex. Getting the turn down is crucial for carrying speed into the home straight, and it's an opportunity to pass others who underestimate the speediness of the bend.

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Deep Forest (Reverse)

Tuning Guide: The mid- to lower 100s in the home straight is the fastest you'll ever get on this track. Thus, your gearing should be pretty close. You'll be turning a lot without too much hard braking, so a good amount of negative camber will also be helpful here. Many of the curves will have you aggressively cutting the apexes, some of which are squarely on a bump or imperfection on the road. Hence, stiff suspension setups are anathema here. Adjust the ride height so that your car won't be bottoming all the time, too.

Recommended Car: Lightweight FF, FR, MR, or RR cars.

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Turn 1: Given the bank and the wideness of the road here, this turn can be taken at moderate speeds. If you're coming from the home straight at full speed, give yourself a lot of room to brake, especially because this bend is at the bottom of a decline. Drop down to third and from the outside, aggressively clip the apex. With the track's width, you can throttle out early.

Turn 2: Past a very minor kink, you'll come across this descending right-hander. Since it's a very wide, increasing-radius turn, you'll only need to hit the brakes very briefly before turning in. As you get inside, you can start powering out, even before the halfway point of the turn.

Turn 3: After going through two tunnels, you reach a seemingly innocuous crest. But it's not harmless. The main problem with this kink is that you've not only gained speed by this point, but it's also on a blind crest. As you reach the crest, your car will lighten, causing it to understeer. To compensate,cut into the turn before the crest.

Turn 4: Riding alongside a rocky canyon, you'll encounter another descending right-hander, which is very similar to turn 2. The strategy is the same. Hit the throttle early so that you'll go wide and toward the outside, which sets you up for the subsequent turn.

Turn 5: At first glance, this next right-hander looks similar to Turn 4. But it throws a rude surprise your way with a blind, uphill bend right at the latter end of the turn. Since a high-speed chicane is just beyond, you can't drift outside here—and it's especially easy to do so given the incline. Let off the throttle in the latter half of the bend to hug the inside; you'll need to be on the right side for the chicane.

Turns 6, 7: The next set of turns takes you to the most technical part of the course. After climbing up the hill, you'll face a mild initial bend, followed by a tighter one. For the first left-hander you'll want to clip the apex, then immediately turn to the right, hugging the inside for the subsequent right. As you enter the tunnel you'll quickly need to brake for the coming tight sweeeper.

Turn 8 : The sweeper just after the first tunnel is difficult on many levels. It's not only off-camber initially, but it also has you ride as close to the inside as possible. But the inside isn't protected by a curb; so if you touch the grass (especially with your rear wheels), it can send you car spinning out of control. Be very careful navigating through this bend.

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Turns 9, 10: After going through a short Michelin-branded tunnel, you'll encounter a set of chicanes. The first chicane's initial left-hander is the most notorious—it's not only slow, but also has you clip an off-camber apex. You can actually go wide here and power out early, though, because there's plenty of runoff (and corner-cutting) space to the right. The subsequent right-hander is much faster; stay on the throttle.

Turns 11, 12: This chicane isn't nearly as difficult as the first, but that doesn't mean you'll cruise right through it, either. The initial left-hander crests near the apex and you'll need to hold off on the gas as you go in and clip the curb. The following right-hander has a relatively flat and wide curb that allows you to clip it aggressively, making it a much faster turn.

Turn 13: Before hitting the home straight, you'll encounter a hairpin that's not too challenging, provided you slow down enough. From the outside, slow to second. Given that this is at the base of a decline, your braking distance will be longer. Turn into the corner, maintaining a speed of about 50 mph as you round the bend. The apex here is late, and two-thirds of the way through you'll be powering out for the final straight.

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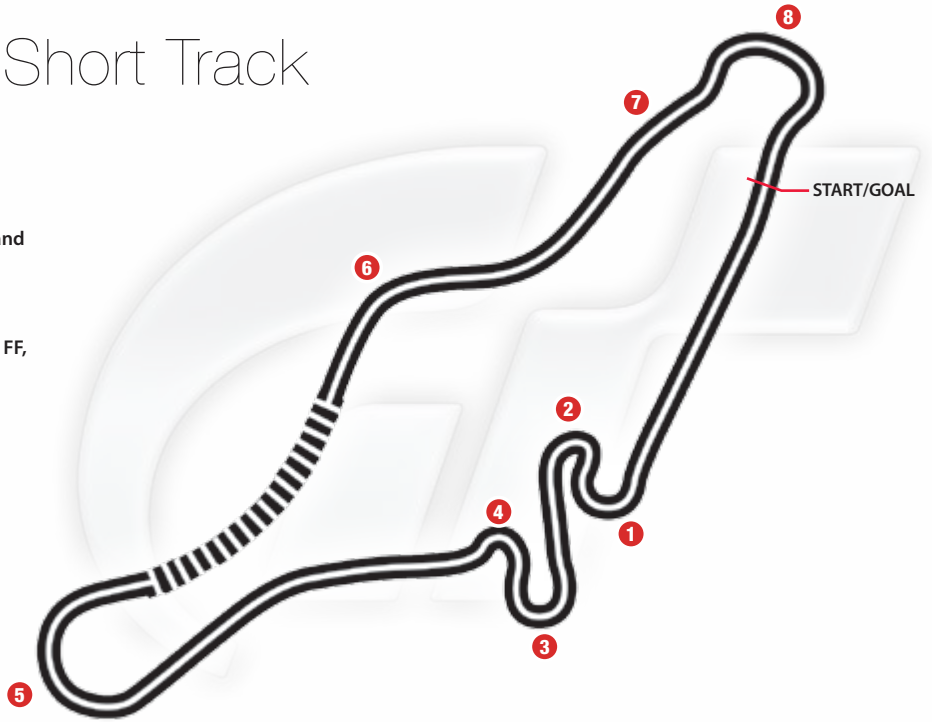
Eiger Nordwand Short Track

Tuning Guide: Long straights are nonexistent in this track; thus, you'll want the gear ratios to be very close. With the tight turns and the lack of places to really accelerate, a lot of negative camber is very helpful here. Since the slowest and trickiest parts of the course are the descending switchbacks, you'll want to be sure your car doesn't oversteer excessively down the hills.

Recommended Car: Responsive, quick-turning FF, FR, MR, or RR.



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Turns 1–3: Right at the start, you'll encounter the most technical part of the course. Since the bends here are very tight, if you're fighting for position you'll want to brake late to get ahead of the competition early on. If you're not able to get to the front here, it'll be very hard to pass on the subsequent switchbacks. The initial right-hander is the quicker of the three switchbacks, but it will nevertheless have you drop to as low as 40 mph. Don't go wide on this turn trying to go faster—you'll want to hug the inside as much as possible. Power out very late, since the next bend is immediately ahead.

The second left-handed switchback is the slowest turn of the course. From the first switchback, cut diagonally into the second (as opposed to the usual outside-in). Speeds here will hover around 30 mph. You can power out a little earlier here, but don't get too throttle-happy or else you'll crash into the railing on the right. Down the hill is the third bend, which will have you driving at 40 mph or lower.

Turn 4: You're not quite out of the thick of it yet. This last is a small, decreasing-radius turn where you'll want to take a very late apex and brake late (and not follow the Driving Line). In doing so, you'll be able to make a straight shot through, ignoring the right-handed kink that immediately follows. You will be somewhat in the dirt when you cut through the kink up ahead, so keep the steering input to a minimum there.

Turn 5: This tight sweeper is harder than it seems. You'll need to brake from the outside and cut in at second gear. Resist the urge to hit the throttle throughout the turn; since it's on an incline without much banking, it's very easy to drift to the outside. Power out very late, about three-fourths of the way out of the corner. Runoff space is practically nonexistent here, so be patient when traversing the inside of the bend.

Turn 6: Past a scenic tunnel, you'll come across a right-handed kink, complicated by a incline leading to a crest at the apex. Cut in before reaching the top of the incline, letting off the throttle and even blipping the brakes beforehand. This shouldn't require you to slow down much, though.

Turn 7: Before the final sweeper is a little chicane that has two different strategies. The first is the conventional one: cut into the right, then left, following the pathway of the chicane. The second strategy is to ignore the chicane altogether, going straight through and cutting into the dirt. Whether the latter strategy will work depends on your car and the speed you're carrying into the final bend. Plowing through the dirt can upset the balance of cars with stiffer suspension. Worse yet, if you're driving a faster car, the braking point will be squarely in the dirt, where braking will be ineffective. Slower, softer cars, on the other hand, can cut through the dirt without any problems. Experiment to see which tactic works best for you.

Turn 8: With the Nordwand in view on your right, you'll hit the final turn. The bulk of the work lies in setting up prior to the bend, as mentioned in turn 7. Slow down to second, then cut in with a late apex so that you can power out straight through the mini-chicane that immediately follows.

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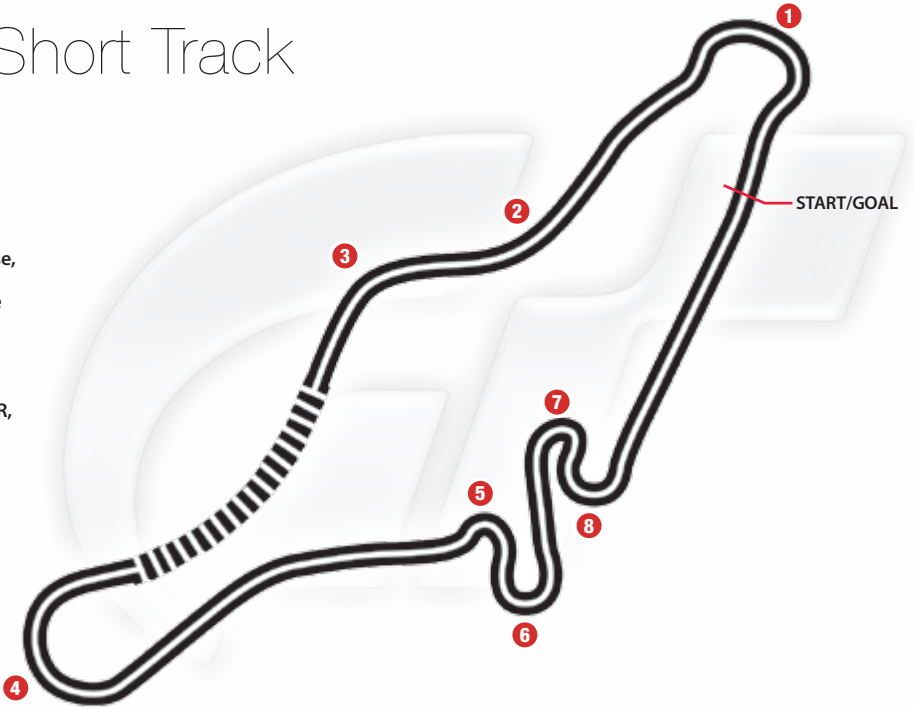
Eiger Nordwand Short Track (Reverse)

Tuning Guide: The tuning philosophy for the reverse version is exactly the same as the forward. The home straight and the path just after turn 1 will be the fastest parts of the course, and even then, you won't approach 150 mph. Gear ratios should be close, put lots of negative camber to the wheels, and put an emphasis on weight reduction modifications and chassis rigidity to make your car more agile.

Recommended Car: Agile, responsive FF, FR, MR, or RR. AWD for the rain.



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Turn 1: From forward or reverse directions, this turn largely remains the same—the biggest difference is when going reverse you don't get a nice view of the Nordwand mountain. When approaching the turn, carefully avoid hitting the dirt protruding from the chicane on the right side. You'll want to get as close to it as possible to approach the right-hander from the outside, but if you clip the dirt area you probably won't be able to brake in time for the corner (and might even lose control). Slow down to second and turn in. Since the corner is squarish, there are technically two apexes, one at the first third and another at the two-thirds mark.

Turns 2, 3: This little right-handed kink can be a challenge because it's blind and down a hill. Chances are you can take it without letting off the gas at all, but it requires perfect timing. At worst, you should only momentarily take your foot off the accelerator; if you're slowing more than that you're overcompensating. However, the left-handed turn that soon follows will require you to slow down and drop to third gear.

Turn 4: Past the tunnel you'll encounter a sweeping left. It starts off going downhill, but quickly starts climbing back up, making it hard to gauge the speed at which you're supposed to take the turn. You should be slow enough through the bend that you can ride along the inside. Power out very late, about three-fourths of the way through the corner.

Turn 5: After crossing a wooden bridge, you'll come across a set of switchbacks. The initial turn is the hardest because of its orientation with a left-handed kink. Unlike the forward course, you can't cut across the dirt at the kink, because it'll kill the braking ability of your car. From the right side, cut in diagonally to the turn, then do the hard braking. Your speeds up the turn will be very slow—about 30 mph. Feel free to cut through the dirt; with uphill climbs it's harder to oversteer.

Turns 6–8: Of the next three switchbacks, the third is the slowest, but the strategy is essentially the same for all of them. From the outside, cut in, dropping down to second gear. For the slowest switchback you'll be hovering around 30 mph, and for lower-horsepower cars you may need to downshift to first gear if you don't have enough torque.

DRIVING IN THE RAIN

First off, for any rain courses you'll want to stick with AWD—you'll need the four-wheel traction. The track strategies don't change much, but you will be going slower. Braking distances will be increased, turning speeds will be slower. Driving responsiveness will be sluggish, but you can also lose control of your car a lot easier.

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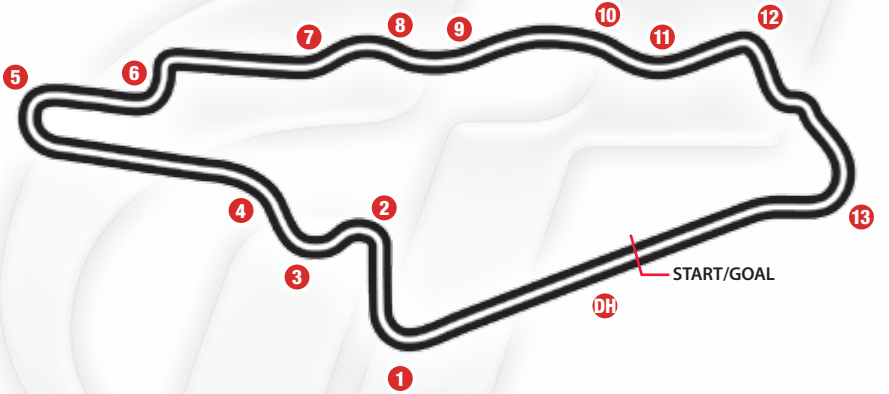
Eiger Nordwand W Trail

Tuning Guide: As you'd expect, with any dirt course you'll want to have a very high ride height—no slammed cars here. Because of the slower speeds, gear ratios should be very close, too. Since these aren't smooth courses, you'll also want a soft suspension setup.

Recommended Car: AWD rally cars or AWD sports cars (and dirt tires).



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Downhill Descent: The W Trail starts with a literal crash and bang. Two giant jumps are just beyond the startling line. Although they are nothing when starting from a stop, they are lethal when coming around the bend from a previous lap. It's tempting to go all out with "Dukes of Hazard" jumps, but you should minimize your airtime here by slamming the brakes just before each jump (there are two). By hitting the brakes, you're shifting the weight forward, giving you more control of the car upon landing.

CAUTION: You can control how your car takes off and lands from a jump based on load. Hitting the gas shifts the weight to the back, causing the nose to go up; mashing the brakes shifts the weight to the front, causing the nose to dip.

Turn 1: If you kept the hang time to a minimum from the downhill, you'll have plenty of time to brake down to second gear here. Round the bend in a slow, tight turn, going around 30 mph.

Turns 2–4: Soon after, you'll come across a chicane. The first two turns will be taken at the same speed, but the second right-hander has an apex near a steep incline, so you'll lose speed midway into the turn. The second turn is followed by mild left-hander, allowing you to floor it down to the mini-straight.

Turn 5: This ultra-slow hairpin bend is on an incline, and will most likely force you to drop down to first gear. Higher-powered cars may be able to take it in second, but given that you're climbing the mountain at this point, you may not have enough torque without downshifting. Take a tight turn around the corner (you can go even more inside than the Driving Line), and power out just as you pass the midpoint. With the low speed, you won't drift outside much.

Turn 6: Soon you'll come to a 90-degree turn, which forces you to stay in second gear and round the corner going around 30 mph. Since a right-hander immediately follows, you'll need to cut diagonally across the road, pointing toward the apex of the next turn. The larger K trail splits off to the left from here.

Turns 7–10: You can really appreciate the scale of the track here: Far ahead, you can see the G and K trails winding up the mountain. The road here starts a series of increasingly wider chicanes where you'll gradually pick up the speed. The first two bends will be taken around 55 mph, and the second two at 65 mph.

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Turn 11: This next bend is surprisingly slow due to the rapid downhill descent. In general, downhill slopes are a lot harder to navigate than uphill ones, due to the inherent instability of the weight shifted forward. You'll stay in second here, but be prepare to drop in speed to the mid 40s.

Turn 12: The subsequent right-hander onto a wooden bridge will have you drop speeds even more, down to even the 20s. Don't hit the gas here too early because you need to cut across the road diagonally and into the final bend.

Turn 13: The K and G trail merge on the road leading to the final bend. You'll be tackling the turn from the road's left-middle lane. Again, you'll drop down to second, staying close to the inside at speeds in the mid-30s. Since turn 13 is more like a sharp sweeper, the apex will be very late here, about three-fourths of the way into the corner.

DIRT AND GRAVEL DRIVING BASICS

When you're accustomed to flying down straightaways at 150 mph, the off-road courses can be a brutal surprise. Here are five helpful tips in taking on dirt and gravel courses.

1. The tracks are slow. A lot of the time you'll be going 40 to 60 mph, and that's perfectly normal. Very rarely will speeds approach 100 mph.
2. Soft touches with the steering wheel are essential. Often the more you turn the wheel, the more your car will just drift and oversteer. Although that may work for tight bends, in general you want to minimize the time spent sliding. Countersteering should also be done with restraint—you don't want to just sharply cut the steering on full lock and slam the gas pedal.
3. Anticipate the turns. Since the tires don't immediately "grab" the road, you'll feel a delay in all your inputs.
4. If all else fails, turn on all the assists. By turning on ASM, Skid Recovery Force, and the TCS to 5 (default), you'll find the turns a lot more manageable—at the cost of slightly hurting your lap times.
5. Downhill is more tricky than uphill. When all the weight is shifting forward, you car will be even more prone to sliding. Hence you'll always want to keep an eye on your speed. It's tempting to lead-foot it, but you'll quickly find yourself slamming into trees, walls, and rails.

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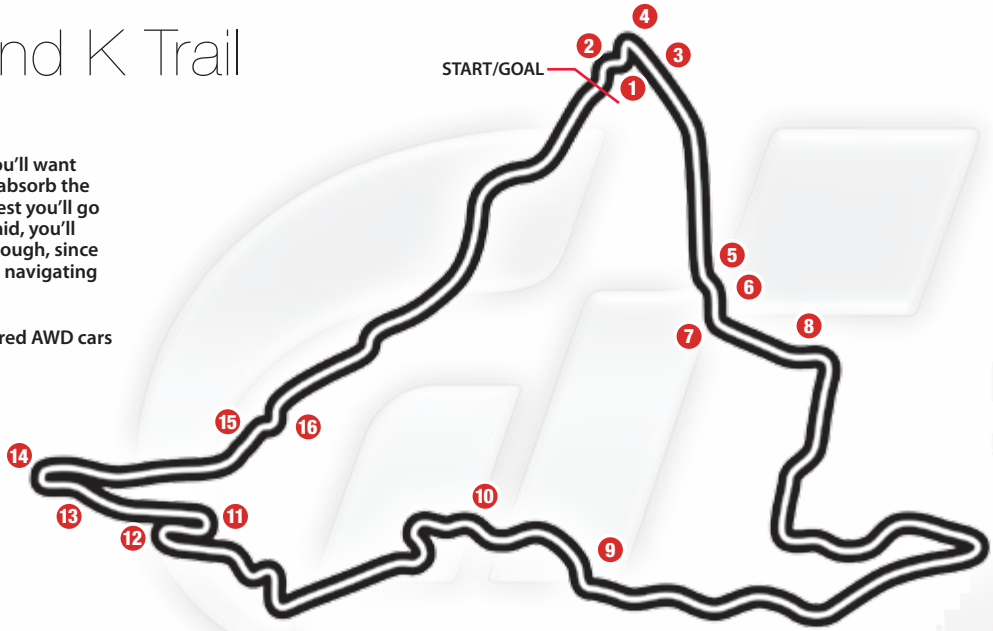
Eiger Nordwand K Trail



Tuning Guide: For rally-type tracks, you'll want taller ride heights, soft suspension to absorb the bumps, and close gear ratios. The fastest you'll go on this track is about 120 mph. That said, you'll want a relatively taller second gear, though, since you'll be using that gear heavily when navigating through a corner.

Recommended Car: Light, high-powered AWD cars with dirt tires.

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Turns 1–4: At the start of the race you're faced with a tight chicane, and it's tempting to plow straight through the middle, cutting across the dirt. If you do, make sure you brake ahead of the dirt patch, before the braking point suggested by the Driving Line. Instead of turning right into the short track, the path cuts left toward the rail station. Your speeds here will be very low—even as low as 20 mph. Once past the bends, you'll have lots of real estate to gain speed again.

TIP: Unless you're cutting into a turn, avoid getting too close to the areas outside of the track. Especially on faster straights, you car will tend to tramline (in other words, getting stuck) at the outside edges, making it difficult to get out.

Turns 5–8 : You encounter this little chicane after an extended straight where you'll pick up speeds of over 100 mph. Since braking distances are much longer on the dirt, you'll need to slam the brakes from a long ways back—at least 50 feet from the slight left-handed kink. This set of bends must be taken slowly—on downhill roads you'll find yourself going wide very easily and quickly. Slow down to second or third gear to around 50 mph for the two turns.

Following turns 5 and 6, you'll cross over railroad track. It's important that you tap the brakes here, because the tracks are raised enough to make your car leap a little in the air. If you're on the gas at all, you'll go way too wide for the right-hander that immediately follows. For the last bend in this series, simply let off the gas and coast through. Since you've already slowed down for the chicane, you won't need to hit the brakes; just exercise moderation with the throttle inputs.

NOTE: The track here converges with the G trail. For details on the G trail turns, see the Eiger Nordwand G Trail (forward) guide.

Turn 9: From here the K trail diverges from the G trail, going farther downhill instead of climbing back up. The initial left-hander is tame, but you don't want to up shift into third here. It's tempting to floor it down the steep hill, but you'll actually need to stay off the gas for most of the descent, hitting the brakes periodically for the little kinks and turns.

Turn 10: Step hard on the brakes here, or else you'll go wide. You need plenty of space to slow down before turn 10 because you don't want to slam the brakes and immediately turn—that will shift the weight of the car even further forward, causing you to wildly oversteer. Speeds here will be in the mid 40s.

NOTE: From here the path merges with the Eiger Nordwand W trail. For detailed directions on the W trail turns, see the Eiger Nordwand G trail guide.

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Turn 11: Beyond the first slight switchback climbing back up, the K trail diverges from the W trail. You'll encounter yet another switchback similar to the one you just climbed. This is also slow, and will drop you down to the first gear range. Whether you want to stay in second depends on how much low-end torque your car has. Peaky turbos will need to downshift, whereas turbos with low- and mid-range torque can stay in gear. Your speed through this bend will be in the 20s. You'll now have a moderate straight to regain speed.

Turns 12–14: Before hitting another switchback, you'll have to contend with a pair of kinks. The first right-hander you can power through, but the second is tricky because it's blind and comes just below a dip. You'll probably want to start on the brakes even before the decline. Just beyond the left-hander is the switchback, and you'll need to continue braking, down to second or first gear (again, depending on your engine's low-end torque). Cut into the tight turn and hug the inside of the corner, even riding into the dirt. Power out as you pass the halfway point.

This nasty bump will send your car airborne.

Turn 15: This seemingly slight, left-handed sweep will require you to hit the brakes a bit. And since there's another dip, do it before it drops down in elevation. To make things worse, there's a pretty sizeable bump in the road that will make your car jump. When you reach this you want to make sure your car is aligned straight with the road ahead.

Turn 16: With chicanes like these, the K trail never lets you accelerate for long. There are two chicanes in succession, but both are pretty mellow. For the first, slow down to second, cut in to the left, then cut right. The second chicane is slightly different in that it's beyond the crest of a hill. Brake before climbing the hill, down to about 50 mph and you should be fine. The track then goes back on to the tarmac, leading you back to the start of the race.

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Eiger Nordwand G Trail

Tuning Guide: The tuning guides for all of the Eiger Nordwand dirt tracks are the same; taller ride heights, soft suspension to absorb the bumps, and close gear ratios due to the lack of high-speed straights. You'll want a relatively taller second gear though, since that will be your main gear for a lot of the bends.

Recommended Car: Light, high-powered AWD cars with dirt tires.

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Turn 1: A couple of seconds into the race, you'll have to contend with a 90-degree right-hander. It's up an incline, and your speed can bleed fast while climbing it, so you'll have to keep blipping the throttle to ensure that you don't slow down. To stay on the inside, you'll need to go around 30 to 35 mph.

Turn 2: After a very small straight, you'll come across a moderate chicane. You haven't had a chance to gain speed, but you'll still have to hit the brakes and drop down to 50 mph or lower. The first bend is blind and beyond the crest, and you'll have to brake prior to reaching the top. You can start turning right just as you reach the crest in anticipation of the bend. Hit the gas briefly before slowing down to around 50 mph for the left-hander.

Turn 3: Next you'll run into a pretty standard 90-degree left. Drop down to second again, rounding the bend at about the same speed as turn 2. You can't power out until you're nearly out of the turn, though, because the road starts a steep descent. The mild chicane down the hill can be powered through to some extent, but as the path starts bending to the right and going uphill, you'll need to blip the brakes to hit the apex. Downhill paths are much harder than uphill: On the one hand, it's easy to gain speed on the downhill; on the other, it's much more difficult to slow down or to control the car in turns.

Turn 4: At the highest elevation point of the track, you'll encounter a tight 150-degree bend. Your speed here will be very slow—about 25 mph—and you'll want to hit the gas only after you've pretty much cleared the bend. The path from here goes downhill, and it's easy to crash into the wall when throttling out early.

Downhill "Straight": After clearing turn 4, you'll have a fairly long stretch of road that's only slightly curved. You can treat it as a stretch, but don't get carried away here. There's a mild left-handed kink that's a bear to contend with because of your speed and because of the grade of the slope. Get ready to drop down to second for the chicane ahead, too.

Turns 5–8: The Driving Line may suggest taking this downhill chicane in third, but you'll really need to do it in second gear if you don't want to bounce from railing to railing like a ping-pong. If you're running too hot, there's nothing much else to do but slam into the railing, so you'll need to slow down to at last 75 mph to take these bends. Before turning into each apex of the chicane bends, slow down to about 55 mph, then power out. The last bend in the set of chicanes is mild, and you can take that about 10 mph quicker into the apex.

Turn 9: You're almost through the downhill portion of the course. This moderate-looking right-hander is best taken at a very slow speed through the apex—about 35 to 40 mph. In doing so, you can power out quickly, down to the mini-straight. The road will kink to the right at the base of the hill and you won't need to hit the brakes or take your foot off the gas at all.

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Turns 10, 11: You're now starting the climb back toward the race's start. The two switchbacks are pretty straightforward, but will require you to slow to a crawl. The first bend will be taken at 30 mph; the second is a little slower at around 25 mph. Since you're fighting against the steep incline for power it's hard to go wide here. Thus it's difficult to find a precise power-out point—it's usually later in the bend, past the two-thirds point.

Turns 12–14: After the switchback, you'll face a series of S-curves beyond a crest. The first three bends are mild enough that you don't need to let off the gas, but the last bend before a sharp turn will require you to slow down to second gear. You'll notice that the Driving Line doesn't have you aggressively go from the outside to the inside; part of the reason is that on dirt roads the car is less responsive and you can't make such quick inputs.

Turn 15: This turn may seem sharp, but because of the road's relative flatness here, it's fairly standard. Downshift to second and take the turn at around 40 mph. You'll be able to power out very early here, around the halfway mark.

Turn 16: The final turn is a slow hairpin that's not too difficult to navigate as long as you've slowed down sufficiently. Your speeds will hover in the mid 20s, and because it flattens out at the top, you'll want to hold off on the throttle until very late in the turn.

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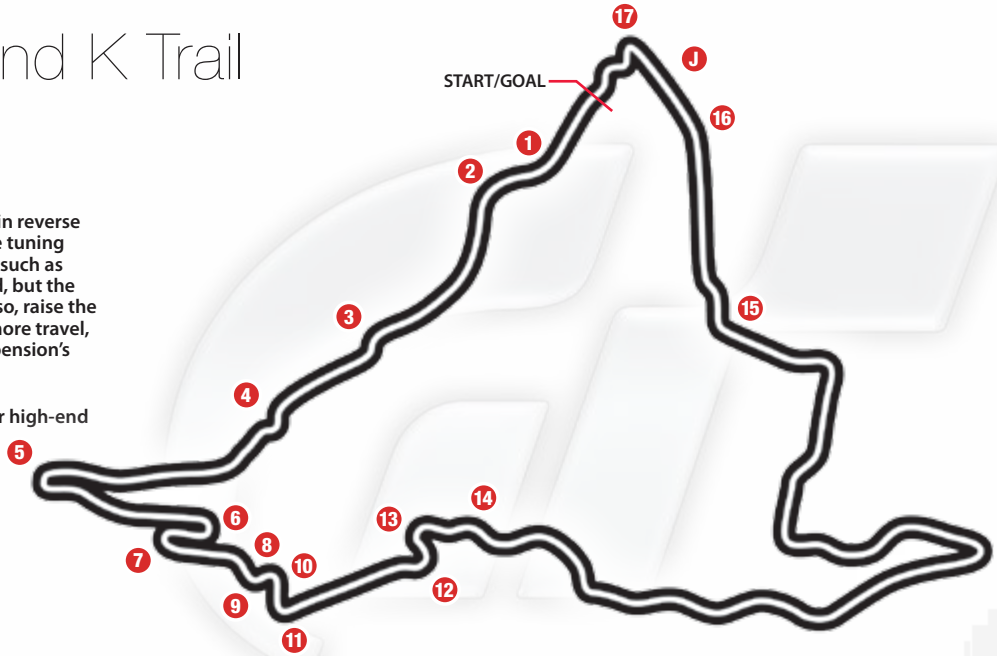
Eiger Nordwand K Trail (Reverse)

Tuning Guide: The experience going in reverse is very different from forward, but the tuning guidelines remain the same. Settings such as camber and toe shouldn't be tweaked, but the shocks and springs should be soft. Also, raise the ride height to give your suspension more travel, otherwise you'll be riding on the suspension's bumpstops.

Recommended Car: AWD rally cars, or high-end AWD cars with dirt tires.



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Turns 1, 2 : Savor the short stretch of tarmac while you can because its the easiest part of the course. The course starts out with a long S-curve. The initial right can simply be powered through, but the second one calls for taking your foot off the gas pedal. The Driving Line may recommend braking, but if you cut in early and lay off the accelerator there shouldn't be any need.

Turn 3: Past the tunnel you'll quickly come across a chicane in the dirt. Since you've piled on lots of speed in the tarmac section, you'll need copious amounts of space to slow down. The braking point will most likely be just before the tunnel's exit. Brake from the outside, then cut into the first apex. The apex itself is just into the dirt, and you'll have to orient yourself to the different ground surface quickly.

Turn 4: You're now embarking on your long and painful descent to the W trail. This second chicane forces you to dramatically drop in speed—and in general, you'll want to hover around second gear as you'll driving down these steep slopes. Avoid turning and braking at the same time, which will easily and quickly induce lots of oversteer—not something you want when teetering on the edge of the abyss. You'll now have a straight section that should reach speeds around 100 mph—but start slowing down when you see the right-handed kink.

Turns 5–7 : Successfully navigating the right-handed kink is essential to set up for the tight switchback shown in the screenshot; otherwise, you'll start making the tight turn from the inside of the corner and go wide. Slow down before turning into the kink, positioning yourself for the hairpin. Once you're past the kink, you should be at the right-center of the lane. Cut into the inside of the bend and hit the throttle when you're almost out of the corner. The kink farther down is mild enough that you can zoom right through. The next two switchbacks are straightforward: Stay inside, go around 30 mph around the bend, and hit the gas late.

Turns 8–11: You're getting close to the bottom of the course, but the grade gets even steeper here. Past this seemingly moderate right-hander are two chicanes, and the section must be taken with extreme care. Unlike most turns, you can't power out here at all; the drop in elevation will naturally make your car gain speed. Brake before turn in and cut in like you'd usually do, but press the gas pedal only if you're dropping below 30 mph—your speed should be in the neighborhood of 30 to 40 mph. After turn 9, you'll begin the ascent back up.

Turns 12, 13: The worst is finally behind you and the rest of the track gets easier. The first turn you hit on the way up is a hook-like left-hander. It's a real slow turn, dropping you down to 25 to 30 mph. You can cut into the grassy inside, changing the shape of the bend from a hook to a more standard 90-degree curve, but don't hit the little yellow barriers set inside. Immediately following that is a similarly shaped bend, this time on an incline and to the right.

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Turn 14: As you continue to climb, you'll come across a wavy stretch of road. For the most part you can keep your foot on the gas, letting off only as you turn in to the next bend. From here, the G trail merges with the K trail temporarily.

> **NOTE:** The G trail and K trail overlap here; for details on the G trail turns, refer to the G trail guide, turns 6 through 17.

Turn 15: Here the G trail splits off from the K trail, and you come across this 80-degree right. It seems simple enough, but the road actually narrows here, leaving a smaller margin for error and forcing you to drop down in speed—more than you'd think is necessary. Once you cross the train tracks, you can get on the gas and start accelerating down the long stretch that gradually veers to the left.

Turn 16: On this fast stretches of the track, you should be able to hit 100 mph by the time you get to this point. That said, you'll have to lose it all starting from this left-handed kink. It's a surprisingly quick bend though, which allows you to take it at around 80 mph.

Jump: This little jump will sneak up on you and cause a serious crash if you're caught unprepared. You're still going very fast here, and the difference in grade will have you drop right into the braking zone for the final couple of turns. By this point, make every effort to align yourself straight ahead. If you make the jump at an angle, you're guaranteed to crash your car along the side.

Turn 17: The last turn is so slow that you'll want to take it in first gear. Your speed will be 20 mph—or even lower. The initial left-hander isn't the problem, though. It's the subsequent right-hander that you won't see until the very last minute. Contrary to conventional wisdom, you won't want to hug the insides here. Stay inside until you get to the middle of the bend, then quickly move to the outside, getting as close as you can to the blue barriers to the right to the road (and in the screenshot). Otherwise, you'll plow headfirst into railing that will seemingly pop out of nowhere. Drift to the right to ensure that you've cleared the wooden rails, and then power out on the tarmac and cross the finish line.

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Eiger Nordwand G Trail (Reverse)

Tuning Guide: Like the K trail and W trail, the tuning philosophy for the reverse course of the G trail will be the same. Tune your car for taller ride heights, soft suspension to absorb the bumps, and close gear ratios. You could actually use production cars in lieu of dedicated rally cars here, as long as they're AWD.

Recommended Car: Light, high-powered AWD cars with dirt tires.

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Turn 1: Although it seems like a standard hairpin on the forward side, going in reverse you'll realize a bump in the road will have you car momentarily hop in the middle of the braking area. As long as you're braking while riding over it, the bump shouldn't present much of a problem. Round the bend going about 30 mph, then power out late if you're following the Driving Line. You can also take a tighter, slower turn around the bend, which will allow you to power out earlier.

Turn 2: Going straight downhill you'll run into a tight, right-handed sweeper. Leave plenty of room for braking. There's not many braking markers on this track, but you can use the overhead power line as a reference. The Driving Line recommends a wide arc around the bend, but if you take a tighter line, you'll not only be able to power out better, but also navigate the approaching left-handed kink with less effort.

Turn 3: Now you're really losing altitude quickly, and it makes these seemingly mild chicanes a chore to maneuver through. The Driving Line might not show any red bands for braking, but you will have to periodically brake, especially right before cutting into the turns. For the first couple of bends you should be in third, and by the time you reach the approach to the switchback, you should be down to second gear.

Turn 4: These two switchbacks are mostly the same, and you'll want to use a similar approach. Again the Driving Line will suggest a wider arc around the turn, but take a tighter one—and especially with traffic, feel free to cut into the grass. When aggressively riding along the inside, your speed will be in the 20s.

Turn 5: Looks are deceiving here, and although you might see a long red band for braking, this is a relatively higher-speed kink. Cut in a little early and stay in third even if the Driving Line suggests dropping into second. Get close to the apex without actually clipping it.

Turn 6: The K trail merges here, going uphill, and you'll now start your climb back up. The left-hander here is straightforward: Brake down to second, turn in and get close to the apex, and power out late. Hit the gas early and you'll drift outside quick, in part due to the off-camber section in the beginning.

Turns 7–11: On the ascent to the highest point in the track, you'll encounter chicanes of varying sizes. This section is especially easier in reverse than forward because the car will remain stable with such a steep climb. The only thing you'll have to do is let off the throttle before cutting into each apex. On the last chicane bend you may need to blip the brakes, but nothing more.

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Turn 12: Here you'll get an awe-inspiring view of the Alps, but there's little time for taking in the scenery. This sharp left will have you drop your speed down to the high 20s or low 30s. As with the other turns, start from the middle of the road, then cut aggressively into the corner. Briefly cross over the grass, then power out once you're about three-fourths of the way out of the turn.

Turns 13, 14: This turn can take you by surprise because past the apex it quickly slopes downhill, causing you to go wide. Brake plenty before this turn to ensure that you can keep to the inside at the apex. The Driving Line may suggest cutting in from the inside, but it's far easier to be right-center of the road (more toward the outside). The road flattens out as you reach the right-hander, but keep off the throttle because you can't carry too much speed through here (about 80 mph at the most).

Turn 15: Immediately following is a blind right-hander. Because it's off-camber and starts sloping downward past the apex, you should take it easy. Stay in second, hanging around 40 mph, and then power out just as you're clearing the bend.

Turn 16: A modest chicane here will have you drop down to second gear. Because the road is flat, it shouldn't cause you too much trouble; let off the throttle on the turn-in, and go easy on the power coming out.

Turn 17: The final turn is one that rewards you for following the Driving Line. Cut in diagonally across the road, clipping the apex and powering out immediately after.

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Eiger Nordwand W Trail (Reverse)

Tuning Guide: Unlike the G or K trails, the W trail is extremely short—and not only that, most of the time you're trudging about in first or second gear. You'll be lucky to hit 90 mph, and the gear ratios can be very short. This is particularly useful for turns that are normally too slow to take in second gear. The transmission will be the biggest focus—other than that, make sure you have a high ride height to prevent bottoming out.

Recommended Car: Production or rally-racer AWD cars with dirt tires.

Turn 1: Even with the longest straight in the course, the fastest you'll get is in the 80 mph range. Therefore, this left-hander up the hill won't require too much braking. Slow down to second, rounding the bend at around 30 mph. There is a series of mini-kinks here, but they're so negligible that you can treat them like a straight.

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Turn 2: The road leading to this bridge gets really bumpy, so be sure you keep a smooth, consistent line. The braking point will be just at the start of the bridge, and you should already be in second gear since the divots and bumps make it hard to gain speed. Cut into the corner, getting close to the inside edge. Your speed will be around 30 mph, like turn 1.

Turn 3: You now run into a series of S-curves, and it will take finesse with both the steering and the throttle. Avoid heavy input of the gas or steering here and try keeping to the middle of the road. Toward the end of the S-curves the bends get smaller but tighter, requiring you to slow down to about 45 mph.

Turn 4: You're at the peak elevation of this short course—now prepare to lose it all on the perilous descent. The turns on the downhill slope will all be slow and tedious, so be patient and resist the urge to mash the gas on the corners. The pair of turns here will have you go about 30 mph. Avoid crazy tail slides since you're going downhill and need to maintain as much control as possible. Go right, then immediately left, while keeping the same speed, then briefly power out for the short straight ahead.

Turn 5: This switchback will have you come to a near-crawl. It's a tight, 180-degree turn that will have you going about 20 mph through the bend, so slow way down. The more speed you carry, the bigger your turning arc will be—which will ultimately be slower. The downhill straight here lets you regain some speed, but get ready to hit the brakes hard once again.

Turns 6, 7: The road here is not only narrow, but also at a steep decline. Don't hit the gas much, if at all. Hit the brakes before making the bend, then downshift to second. You're essentially rolling your car down the hill, letting the car gently slide down. Any throttle input will send you banging into the outside railing, so take it easy. Slow down to about 40 mph, and ride along the inside. A right-hander immediately follows and will make you drive even slower. Hug the inside of the road, but don't let your rear wheels touch the grass. Your speed leading into the bridge will be around 30 mph.

Turn 8: You have almost no chance to gain speed past the bridge because you'll be crawling through the final bend as well. While in second gear, traverse the left-hander at around 30 mph. Since it's on a slight incline, it's easy to lose power here, so make sure you have enough torque. You could even hit the brakes and the gas at the same time, which brings your RPM up while maintaining the same speed. This, however, may not be possible, depending on your controller setup.

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Fuji Speedway F

Tuning Guide: There are two more turns in the F course that aren't in the GT, but the tuning philosophy doesn't really change. A major thrust of the course is the straight, and you'll want to tinker with your gear ratios to ensure that you're near the rev limit in top gear by the time you have to hit the brakes for turn 1.

Recommended Car: Quick-accelerating RWD and AWD.

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They are hard to notice, but brake markers are on both the left and right sides. The ones on the left are on the fence.

Turn 1: This first bend is essentially an increasing-radius turn—but the angle of the second bend is negligible so you only need to worry about the first. Since you're coming from a decent-sized straight, you'll be carrying a lot of speed here, and you'll want to make sure you have the best braking point. Although they're really hard to see, there actually are brake markers here, so use that for reference. The Driving Line comes in handy here for the brake point, too. From the outside, slow down to second gear, and cut in around 55 mph. Power out as you hit the apex.

When racing against opponents, this area will get very busy with cars fighting for the top spot. If that happens, aggressively cut inside, even to the point of crossing over on the grass. By doing so, you'll have cars on the outside that will prevent you from going wide as you hit the throttle.

Turn 2: With the wide roads, it's easy to get lazy and not aggressively cut the apex here. When learning the track, try taking this at a higher gear and speed than what you'd expect, but braking and cutting in early. By doing so, you may be able to carry more speed through the corner than you thought possible.

Turn 3: A long, U-shaped sweeper, this left-hander will put your throttle modulation skills to the test. At speeds around 80 to 90 mph, it's a pretty quick turn, and you'll want to maintain a smooth line while hugging the inside of the bend. Don't go beyond the inside edge of the track, though, because there's no curb here—and if the rear wheels touch the grass, it can send your car spinning out of control.

Turn 4: You'll have a brief respite with a mini-straight before hitting this sharp, left-handed turn. It's an increasing-radius bend, with the apex at the tip of the sharpest part of the corner. From the outside, slow down to second gear and cut in, clipping the apex. Immediately get on the gas, because the radius immediately lessens, allowing you to lead-foot it the rest of the way. There are two mild kinks beyond this, and neither requires you to slow down.

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Turns 5: Beyond this bend the Fuji Speedway F track differs slightly from the Fuji Speedway GT course. This bend becomes slow and tighter, and requires you to cut the apex more aggressively. Setting it up is similar though. Drop down to second gear, decelerating until you're in the 30s.

As you round the bend, keep your foot off the gas because you're more prone to go wide here than going into the bend too deep. As you clear the apex of the turn, you can only briefly power out because another turn is up ahead.

Turn 6: The left-hander here is also slow, and will force you down to speeds of 40 mph. Once you're almost out of the bend, accelerate out. The road will sweep gently to the right, and when it does you'll want to accelerate out, drifting to the left for a sharper right-hander.

Turn 7: This slightly hooked right-hander can actually be taken as a standard 90-degree right. To do so, you'll need to ride over the curb at the apex. Cut into the corner from the outside aiming for speeds roughly in the 50 to 60 mph range. As the nose of your car points toward the apex, hit the power, aggressively clipping the striped curb.

Turn 8: The road briefly straightens out before gradually transitioning into a decreasing-radius bend. Because the tighter part of the turn is on a crest, it can be hard to see and can take you by surprise. Hit the brakes when you're approaching the approximate midpoint of the bend, aiming for speeds of about 50 mph. Cut into the bend and clip the very-late apex. Power out as you're about to drive over the curb. The last bend is yet another decreasing-radius turn, which gives you some space to set up for the final corner.

Turn 9: Since the long straight is one of the key passing opportunities in the course, you'll want to have as much as you can on the turn exit. Thus, a late apex is very useful here. Although it has you drop lower in initial entry speed, it provides a payoff with more time spent accelerating out of the corner. Brake late into this corner and from the outside, cutting in at a sharper angle. Late braking also comes in handy when there's a lot of traffic. Shoot past the opponents initially, then cross over to the inside and power out with more speed.

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Fuji Speedway GT

Tuning Guide: The home straight that spans for nearly a mile cannot be ignored. Make the most of it by tweaking your gear ratios. The track overall doesn't have a lot of turns, so focus more on the acceleration aspect than on tight turning. Keep suspension settings stiff because the pavement here is really smooth. Don't use lots of camber; put some downforce on the front and rear for high-speed stability.

Recommended Car: Quick-accelerating FR.

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Turn 1: Technically, there's two turns on this bend, but the only one to worry about is the first; through the second bend you can just floor it. Having the perfect braking point dictates how quick you'll be here. There aren't many landmarks to use as a braking marker, but the small side road to the left will be a good indicator of where you should stomp on the brakes. The Driving Line is pretty accurate for the braking point, too. From the outside you'll slow down to about 55 mph, cutting in and letting the speed gradually drop as you let off the gas pedal. Power out just past the apex and you're good to go.

Turn 2: If you're going by the Driving Line, it's easy to use too much of the brakes here. The game may recommend dropping down to third, but you may be able to get away with staying in the mid-RPM range at fourth gear. The key is cutting in early—before what the Driving Line suggests because you can clip the apex here.

Turn 3: This broad, U-shaped sweeper is all about keeping a smooth, consistent line throughout. The Driving Line is a great reference for the path you can take here. Although you can ride much more inside than the Driving Line, you'd be forced to make a sharper turn two-thirds of the way through, so keep to the wider arc. Modulate the throttle so that you neither go wide nor too inside.

Turn 4: Immediately following the sweeper is this slow, increasing-radius turn. Although the Driving Line suggests starting the turn from the middle of the road, the outside may give you a better exit speed, so experiment between the two strategies and see what's quickest for you. Regardless, you'll want to clip the apex at speeds typically below 50 mph, then hit the gas pedal out of the apex.

Turn 5, 6: As you continue powering out from the last bend, you'll hit two mild, right-handed kinks. Lead-foot through both of them.

You might not notice in the thick of the race, but Mount Fuji is visible in the distance (straight ahead).

Turn 7: Interestingly, the Driving Line may not suggest clipping the apex here, but you should. Slow down to second or third, cutting in early and clipping the inside curb. The road is wide here, so you can power out right as you cross the apex.

Turn 8: Although the Fuji Speedway F course has a little bend right after turn 7, the GT course simply goes straight ahead and into a U-shaped bend. Aggressively cutting into the turn and riding on the curb will make the initial right-hander less of a hook shape and more like a standard, 90-degree bend, but depending on the stiffness of your suspension, you may want to just clip it with the inside tires and keep to the tarmac.

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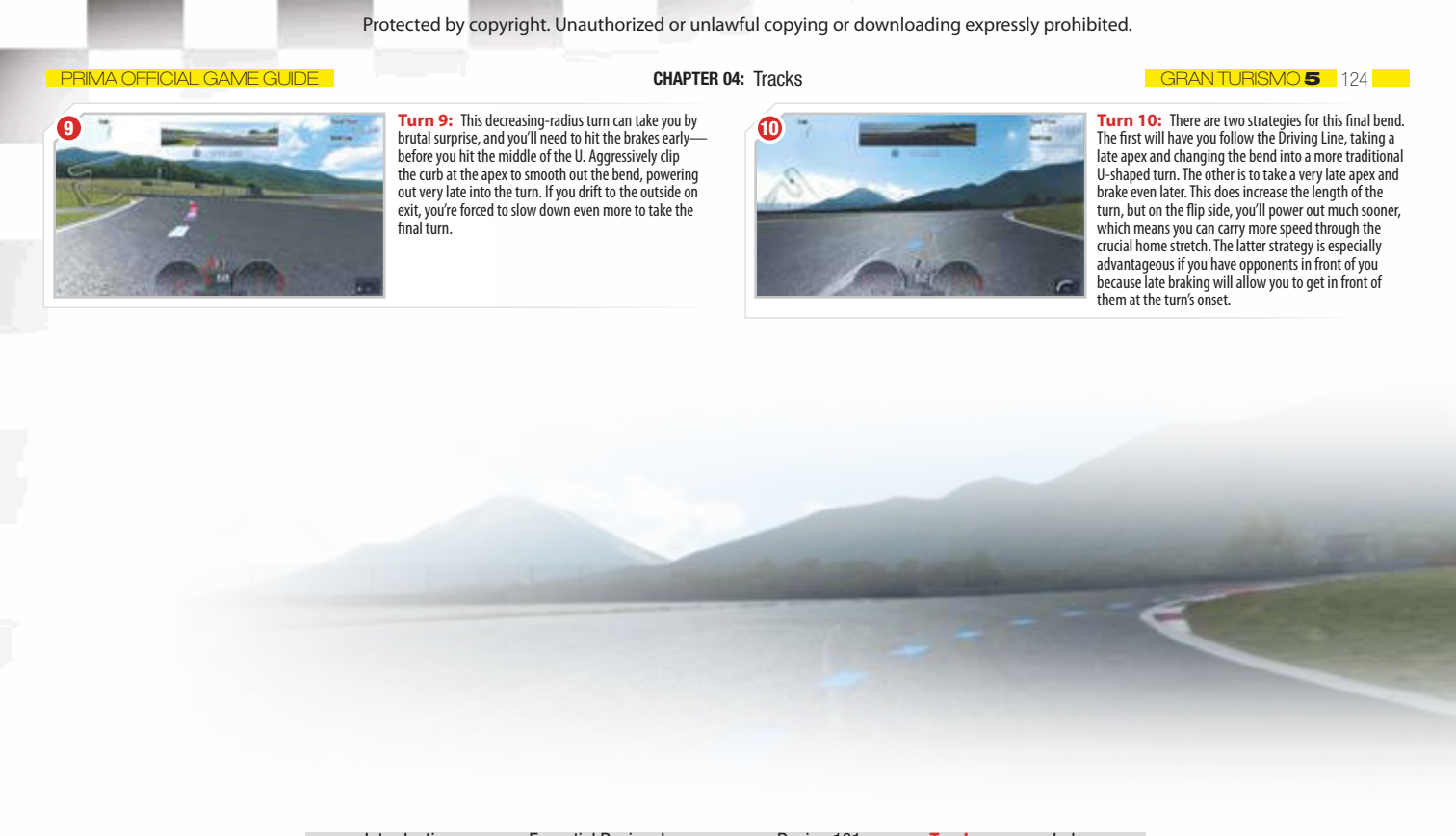
Turn 9: This decreasing-radius turn can take you by brutal surprise, and you'll need to hit the brakes early—before you hit the middle of the U. Aggressively clip the curb at the apex to smooth out the bend, powering out very late into the turn. If you drift to the outside on exit, you're forced to slow down even more to take the final turn.

Turn 10: There are two strategies for this final bend. The first will have you follow the Driving Line, taking a late apex and changing the bend into a more traditional U-shaped turn. The other is to take a very late apex and brake even later. This does increase the length of the turn, but on the flip side, you'll power out much sooner, which means you can carry more speed through the crucial home stretch. The latter strategy is especially advantageous if you have opponents in front of you because late braking will allow you to get in front of them at the turn's onset.



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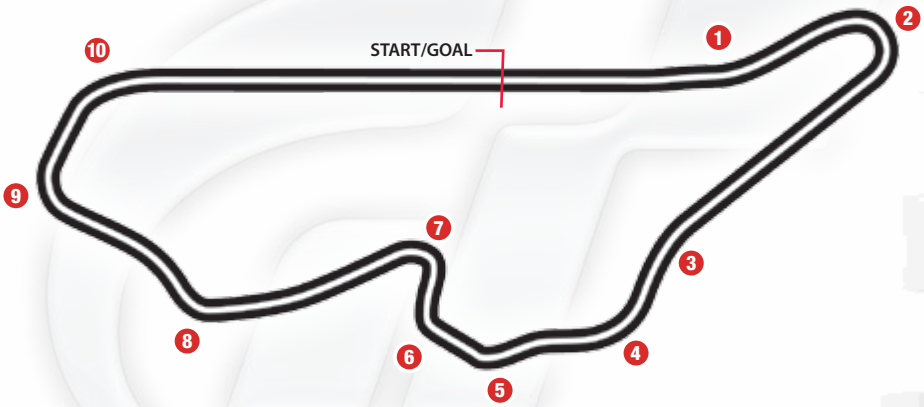
Grand Valley East

Tuning Guide: Given the course's short distance, use soft racing tires if the race doesn't require a lot of laps. The home stretch will be the key passing point, so optimize your gearing so that it's not too close. The emphasis here will be acceleration, not top-end speed.

Recommended Car: Almost any drivetrain can work here, but preferably FR cars that can turn on a dime.



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Turns 1, 2: The kink here can be taken at full speed—that said, the braking point might be right after or right at the apex of this kink, making the little bend more challenging than it seems. Cut in from the left side and turn hard to the left. The tight hairpin that follows has a speed-killing pit on the outskirts, so stay on the road at all costs. Travel along the inside in second, the hit the gas as you clear most of the turn. This is an ideal place to pass, whether it be by late-braking into the apex, or riding along the inside. At the subsequent straight you'll find that this track diverts from the full course.

Turns 3, 4: The initial left-handed kink can be taken at full throttle, but the subsequent turn requires some throttle modulation and most likely dropping a gear. Since you're climbing up to the crest, the car will tend to push (understeer). It's easy to hit the left wall here without the runoff space, so don't try and force the turn at a higher speed.

Turn 5: Grand Valley's east section momentarily merges with the full circuit. This bend is deceptively easy and won't need much effort to navigate through. From the outside, clip the apex to make the bend less angular. You can stay in third gear here and apply a fair amount of throttle.

Turn 6: A sharper curve than the previous two, turn 6 requires some moderate braking soon after the last turn. This corner will be slower than the last; drop down to second gear. When powering out, you'll drift to the outside, but immediately start moving back to the right lane for the next turn, which will be even tighter.

Turn 7: For the east section this turn is the sharpest in the course Don't be afraid of dropping to the low 40s in speed because that's where you need to be to take the corner quickly. After decelerating, gradually start applying the gas because it's a short turn. If you're drifting to the outside too quick, let off the gas.

Turn 8: Timing is everything for this bend, which takes some anticipation to maximize your speed. While inside the tunnel the road gradually bends to the right. Stay on the left side of the road, and the braking point will be just be around where the tunnel ends (or maybe a bit before). Cut across the corner aggressively. If you're not close to clipping the curb on the right side, your turn is too wide.

Turn 9: This bend will have you do some light-to-moderate braking. Brake while driving straight on the outside, then cut in, anticipating the turn. You should clip the apex on this turn and ride over the striped red curb.

Turn 10: The full course once again merges with the east section, meaning this is the same turn as turn 11 on the Speedway. The only difference is that you've dropped down in speed for the last turn, so this corner should be taken at full speed. From the outside, cut in and never let off the gas.

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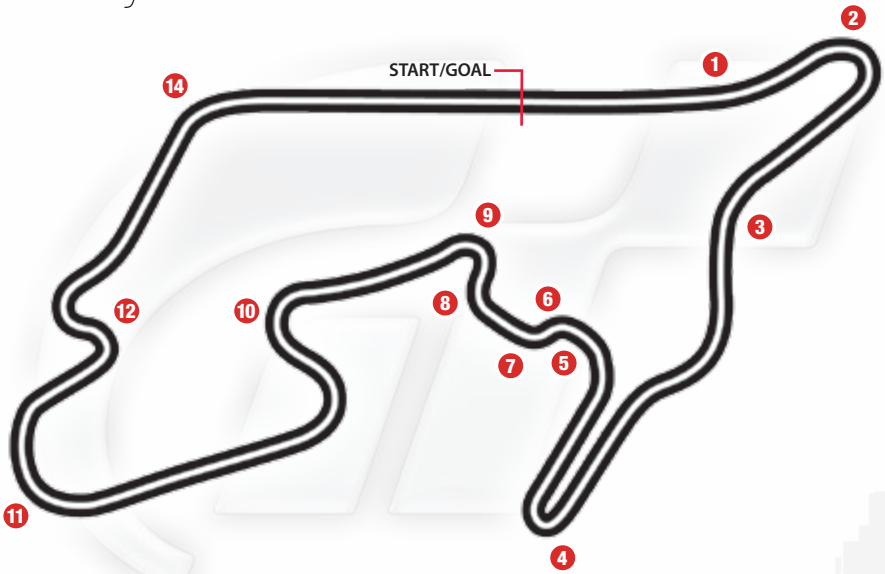
Grand Valley Speedway

Tuning Guide: Your tuning rationale should be very similar to Suzuka; both courses have extended straights, both have winding chicanes and sweepers. Avoid lots of camber; make sure your final gear isn't so small that you bounce of your rev limiter in top gear. If you have plenty of room left in your RPM range at the end of the straight, use a larger final gear ratio to improve acceleration. The road isn't particularly rough and you generally won't be riding over the curb much, so stiffer suspension settings can still work.

Recommended Car: high-end RWD or AWD, with balanced performance.



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Turn 1: The first two turns are identical to Grand Valley East. Before entering the hairpin, you'll come across a minor left-handed kink. Don't slack off and try barreling straight toward the hairpin; the better you set yourself up here, the faster and smoother your run around the hairpin will be. If you're coming from a previous lap, you'll be at very high speeds here. Nonetheless, if you anticipate the turn enough you'll most likely be able to take the kink at full-throttle with most vehicles. From the outside (right side) of the track, cut in early to the left. You should now be on the outside for the approach for the next turn.

Turn 2: This grueling hairpin surprisingly leaves little room for error. The sandy patch on the outskirts can quickly bog down your car and easily cost you the race. Slow down plenty here. Drop down to second gear and stay along the turn's inside. Power out once you start seeing the bend unwind. If you're at the start of the race, this hairpin will be an ideal passing opportunity.

TIP: Late-brake past the opposition on hairpins and other slow turns. If you're up against AI opponents, use their braking point as a reference and brake a half second to a second later. Even if you overshoot slightly, your goal is to get on the inside. Don't hesitate to brush against them a bit, either.

Turn 3: This minor sweeper requires very little effort to navigate since it's on a hill. You can manage it by letting off the gas and steering. The incline will bleed your speed without your having to apply the brakes.

Turn 4: A hairpin that's even tighter than the first, this one has you drop down at least to second gear. Because your speeds can run even lower than 40 mph, this might be one of the few times you drop into first if your low end lacks enough power at second. Due to the relatively narrow road and the gravel pit to the outside, you don't want to run wide. Power out only after you start seeing the exit. While in the turn, hug the inside to make as tight a radius you can.

Turn 5: This left-handed sweeper gets tricky because it's followed immediately by an angular turn that can stop you dead in your tracks if you're going too fast. The sweeper itself can be taken pretty quick—around third gear—but as soon as you start approaching the middle of the turn, you'll need to slow down for the next right-handed turn, likely dropping down to second.

Turn 6: To tackle the impending hard right corner smoothly, get close to the curb on the left side, either clipping it or riding along its edge. You're now on the left side of track, in position to take on turn 7.

Turn 7: Before you have a chance to breathe comes turn 7. Drop down to second or third because of its sharp angle and the narrow track. Brake before turning in, and power out at the apex. Since the area outside the track is paved, you can use it for extra space, should you go wide.

Turn 8: Soon following is turn 8, and you'll need to quickly hit the brakes. From the outside, slow down to around 50 to 65 mph, then turn right. Stay on the inside of this bend as much as possible because the next bend will be an even sharper left-hander. If you trail to the left side of the road, serve back to the right, even if it means letting off the gas; otherwise, you'll be in a poor position for turn 9.

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Start powering out at this point.

Turn 9: Since this is a very angular turn, you'll need to be on the outside and slow down lots. Even if the gear indicator recommends second, keep in mind that you'll be at very low speeds in that gear, hovering around 40 to 45 mph. The apex will be around the middle, but don't power out until you can start seeing the edge tunnel entrance or else you'll run too wide.

Turn 10: Turn 10 is a pretty standard sweeper. Drop down to second as you're turning in and maintain constant throttle throughout. You can hammer the throttle as you enter the tunnel, but the tunnel itself is also a bend, so you'll have to let off quickly and slow down again, likely on the cusp of second. Hit the throttle as you're exiting the tunnel.

Turn 11: Past the giant bridge, you're enter another tunnel, this one with a view to the left. From the outside of the lane, start braking once you enter into the tunnel and shift down to around third. Or, you can drop to fourth, then start turning while letting off on the gas completely, downshifting to third as you gradually lose speed. Stay to the inside of the corner. The radius of the bend is slowly widening, so you can let on the gas more and more as you exit the turn. Regardless, be careful not to go too wide, or else you'll bang against the railing coming out of the tunnel.

Turns 12, 13: After the tunnel, start moving to the right side of the road quickly for this slow-moving chicane. Drop down to second, and anticipate the turn. This is slow—around 40 to 45 mph—so take your time. You can gas out very briefly after the first apex, but you'll need to come back down to the same speed for the second apex. Power out as you hit the second apex. The road will have some runoff space you can take advantage of here.

Turn 14: This high-speed turn is somewhat reminiscent of the fast turn on Suzuka, except it bends to the right. From the outside of the lane, cut in early, anticipating the corner and clipping the apex. Depending on your car, you may not even need to let go of the gas. At most, with most cars all you'll need to do is let off the gas briefly mid-turn. If you're going too wide while coming out of the apex, simply let off the gas.

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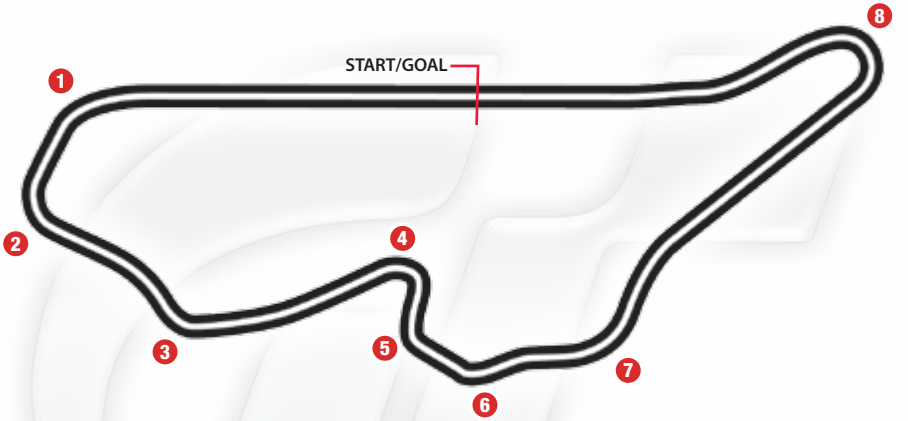
Grand Valley East Reverse

Tuning Guide: The East section is a relatively short, moderate speed course that's most notable for its home straight so you'll want to use that as your main advantage. Tweak your final gear so that it's just short enough to have your car approach the rev limiter. Or, another approach is to gain on your opponents in the twists, focusing instead on your car's on responsiveness.

Recommended Car: Any drivetrain can work here, but preferably a car with decent acceleration.



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Turn 1: Unlike the Speedway reverse, this turn has to be navigated with a bit more finesse. The entry speed is the same—right around 100 mph in fourth gear—but the subsequent harder turn means you can be merrily planting your foot in the throttle afterward. Drop down to about 120, then turn in with your foot off the pedal, allowing the car to come down to the desired speed when it reaches the apex.

Turn 2: Quickly after the initial turn comes a moderate left-hander that requires you to slow and drop down one gear. Since you're climbing up a hill here, you can apply quite a bit of throttle coming out. Just remember to cut into the apex, or else you'll have to slow down mid-corner to prevent hitting the side.

Turn 3: This turn is on an incline, forcing you to turn in quicker than you might expect. Also, since the bend is on a crest, it's hard to see the turn. Therefore, the timing of your turn-in is the biggest factor in navigating this corner. Your speed at the apex should be 80 mph or lower. You'll have a relatively straight line in the tunnel, so go wild with the throttle.

Turn 4: This is exactly the same as turn 6 in the Speedway. From the left side, slam the brakes and drop down to second gear. Turn into the corner and watch your speed; if you're above 50 mph you're most likely coming in too hot. The apex is at the turn's midpoint, past which you'll want to hit the throttle. Try to stay on the left side of the road for the next turn.

Turns 5, 6: Since you've decelerated quite a bit from the last bend, you should be able to handle the next two bends with your foot on the gas pedal the whole time. Still, you should time your turns so that you hit the apex.

Turn 7: While climbing up the hill, you're going to face a left-hand turn that requires mild braking. Tap the brakes, then turn in from the left side to the right. The incline also bleeds your speed, so you can hit the throttle earlier than you might expect. That said, the road is narrow here, so let off the throttle if you risk hitting the wall on the left side.

Turn 8: After a small stretch of a straight, you face the track's only hairpin. Use the distance signs overhead to gauge your braking point. For quicker cars, the point is around the 100 marker on the overhead sign. Slam the brakes and drop down to second, then turn in from the outside to the inside. The speed you should be aiming for is around 60 mph. Hit the gas as you're two-thirds of the way around the bend, and you're home free to the finish line.

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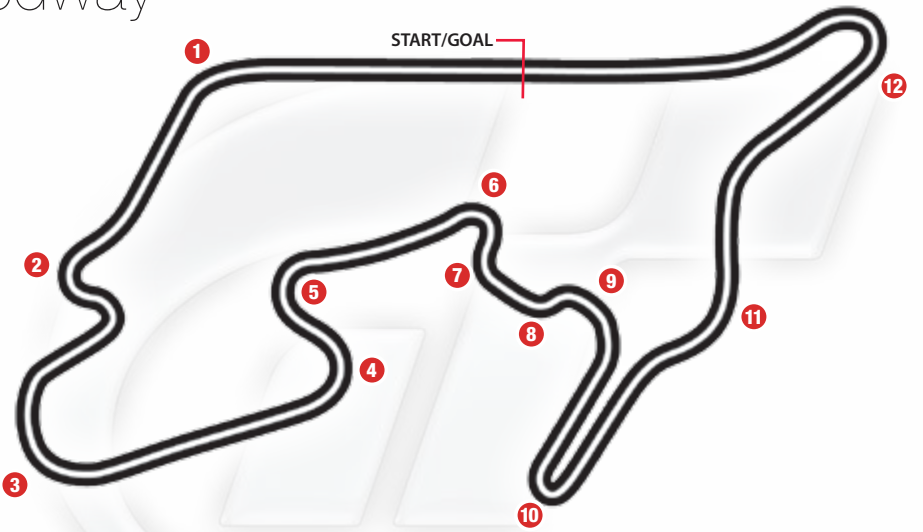
Grand Valley Speedway (Reverse)

Tuning Guide: The forward and reverse tuning philosophy is largely the same. That said, the reverse version of this track tends to have more turns downhill, so if your car is prone to oversteer, you may need to make the car more neutral. Since the track has a balanced mix of high speeds, tight corners, and fast sweepers, you'll need a versatile setup.

Recommended Car: Fast and agile RWD or AWD, with well-rounded performance.



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Turn 1: Unlike in the normal direction, you must hit the brakes to hit this turn. Drop to around 100 mph and turn in early, clipping the apex. If you're not on the inside at the corner, it'll hurt you ability to accelerate out.

Turn 2: This sharp chicane is consistent throughout, and is more a test of your coordination with braking and accelerating. Drop down to second gear, then turn. You have a brief moment to accelerate before having to let off the gas (or blip the brakes) and repeat the process for the right-hander.

Turn 3: The tunnel section will have you drop down in speed initially from the outside, then cut into the inside. If you have the traction to hit the gas while turning hard, you can do so, but stay on the inside of the bend until the tunnel is about to end. It's easy to go too wide upon exiting the tunnel with full throttle, which leads you to hit the railing on the side.

Turns 4, 5: Past the arched bridge you'll enter yet another tunnel. Stay on the outside while dropping down to second gear, then cut in to the inside. Since another bend quickly follows, don't mash the pedal to the point of drifting outside. Keep on the left side of the track. When the right-hander approaches, turn in, maintaining the inside until you reach the curve's midpoint. Power out, but keep track of whether you have enough space to drift outside; if not, let off the gas.

Don't power out until you've reached the end of the sweeper.

Turn 6: The mini-straight in the tunnel offers you the chance to gain some speed, but prepare to lose it all for this sharp corner. From the left side of the track, start hitting the brakes until you hit second. Turn in, aiming for speeds in the 40s to 50s. After getting to the inside at that speed, start powering out. The next turn requires you to be on the right side, though, so move back to the right side of the track if throttling out is causing you to go wide.

Turns 7–9: You haven't had much time to gain speed here, so probably the most you'll have to do is let off the throttle when turning in to this left-hander. Drifting wide is a good thing here, since you want to be on the right side for turn 8. The left-hander in turn 8 still has you at lower speeds from the last bend, so it might only require slight throttle modulation.

Nevertheless, don't forget to hit the apex and anticipate the turn. Once you start climbing the hill, though, you'll need to hit the brakes for the sweeper at turn 9. Because it's on an incline, your car will tend to understeer, so drop down one gear and anticipate the turn. You can power out relatively early due to the angle of the slope and the decreasing-radius turn, though your car will continue understeer. Let off the throttle if necessary, especially if you're running wide when exiting the turn.

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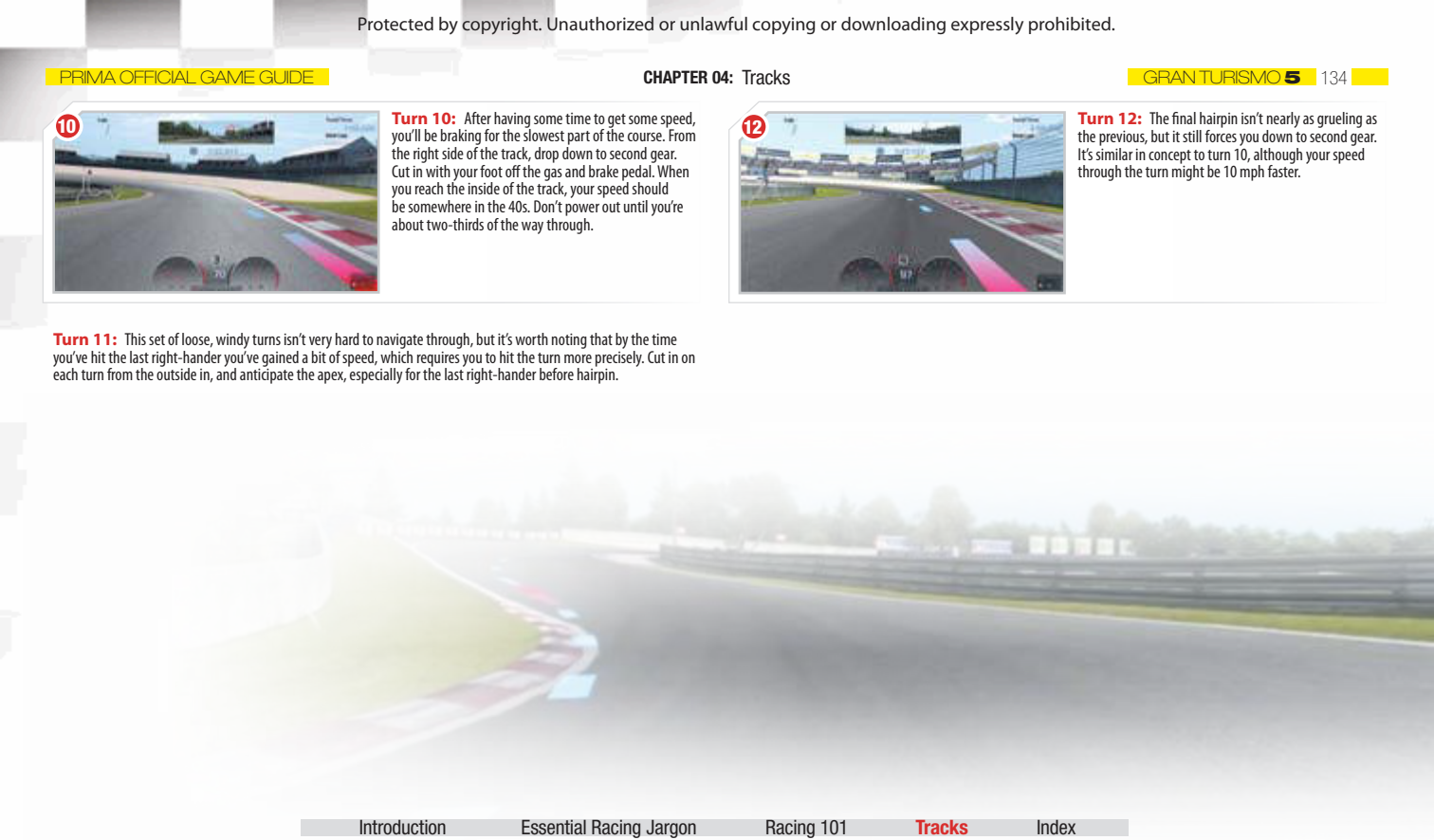
Turn 10: After having some time to get some speed, you'll be braking for the slowest part of the course. From the right side of the track, drop down to second gear. Cut in with your foot off the gas and brake pedal. When you reach the inside of the track, your speed should be somewhere in the 40s. Don't power out until you're about two-thirds of the way through.

Turn 12: The final hairpin isn't nearly as grueling as the previous, but it still forces you down to second gear. It's similar in concept to turn 10, although your speed through the turn might be 10 mph faster.

Turn 11: This set of loose, windy turns isn't very hard to navigate through, but it's worth noting that by the time you've hit the last right-hander you've gained a bit of speed, which requires you to hit the turn more precisely. Cut in on each turn from the outside in, and anticipate the apex, especially for the last right-hander before hairpin.



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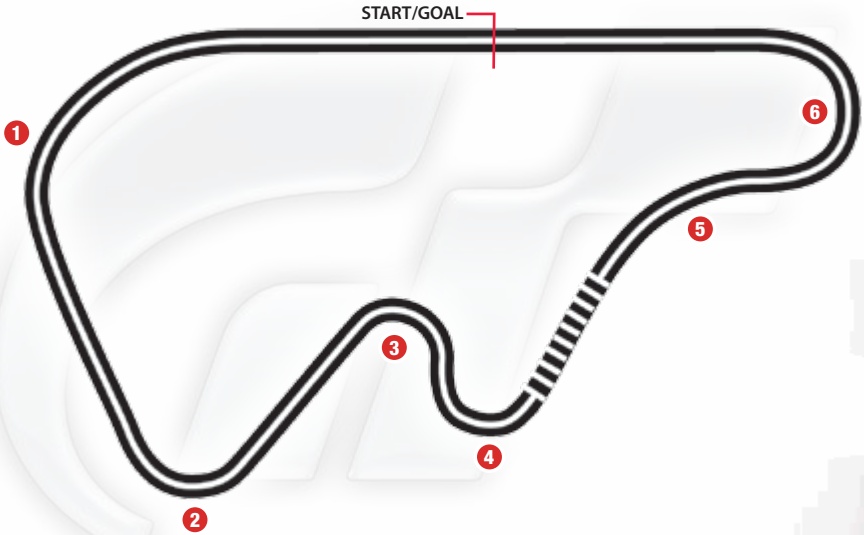
High Speed Ring

Tuning Guide: This beginner-friendly track has you carrying pretty good speed through the high-speed bends. Use a lot of downforce and keep your ride height lower to offset lift. Adjust your gears so that you're close to hitting the rev limiter when you reach the home straight. The track is also pretty smooth, which allows you to keep stiffer suspension settings.

Recommended Car: High-horsepower FR cars are really in their element here.



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Turn 1: The first turn is one of the quickest, but also the hardest in the course due to the decreasing radius toward the end. The radius tightens halfway through the bend, and you'll want to cut in while letting off the gas. Since you're driving faster cars at speeds exceeding 150 mph, the turn-in point comes in very quick, so anticipate the turn and cut in slightly earlier. Your exit speed is equally important to the turn itself, so throttle out about three-fourths of the way through the bend. If you bang into the outer wall, you hit the gas too early; if you have lots of room to spare, you hit the accelerator too late.

Turn 2: While you're on a high-speed binge from the straight, this sharper sweeper can take you by surprise. Slow down quite a bit—fourth gear for high-end cars with six-speed transmissions, third gear for slow cars with five-speeds. The Driving Line may suggest doing the bulk of the braking while turning in, but that won't work. Brake beforehand, then cut in with your foot off the gas, allowing your car to drop naturally to the perfect speed. Stay on the inside of the turn, then power out relatively early, about halfway through the bend.

Turns 3, 4: The Driving Line may be a little off with the braking point here, too. From the outside, drop down to third gear. When you're in the upper RPM range of third, start turning in without any throttle input. By the time you reach the inside of the curve, you should be at speeds below 70 mph—whatever speed it takes to keep on the inside. Power out very late into the turn, because you don't want to drift to the left side; the left side becomes the inside for the next turn, and you'll be in a bad position there.

The left-handed sweeper that follows is exactly like the first. Both are off-camber and will feel slower than what the minimap suggests. The difference with the second bend, though, is that it exits into a straight. Power out about two-thirds of the way through the turn, and don't punch the throttle before then—with a tunnel fast approaching you won't have any runoff space or rumble strips to use to your advantage.

Turn 5: After crossing the suspension bridge, you'll encounter an easy right-handed sweeper. The main challenge isn't the sweeper itself, but is actually the transition in brightness from the dark tunnel to the sunlit sky. Even if your "eyes" are still adjusting (the game simulates eyes adjusting to different light intensities), start turning to the left.

Turn 6: The final turn is a quick left-handed sweeper that takes you into the home stretch. Since the home stretch is quickest part of the track, having a great exit out of the bend is one of the most important aspects to winning the race. When entering the corner, you should slow down to fourth gear.

What lane you'll want to stay in depends on your car's speed capabilities. You don't want to get too close to the inside, because the innermost lane by the curb is off-camber, and will hurt your cornering speed. Stay about half a lane or a full lane-width from the inside (there's no paint lines here so you'll have to guesstimate). Because of the bank, you can power out surprisingly early, around the halfway point.

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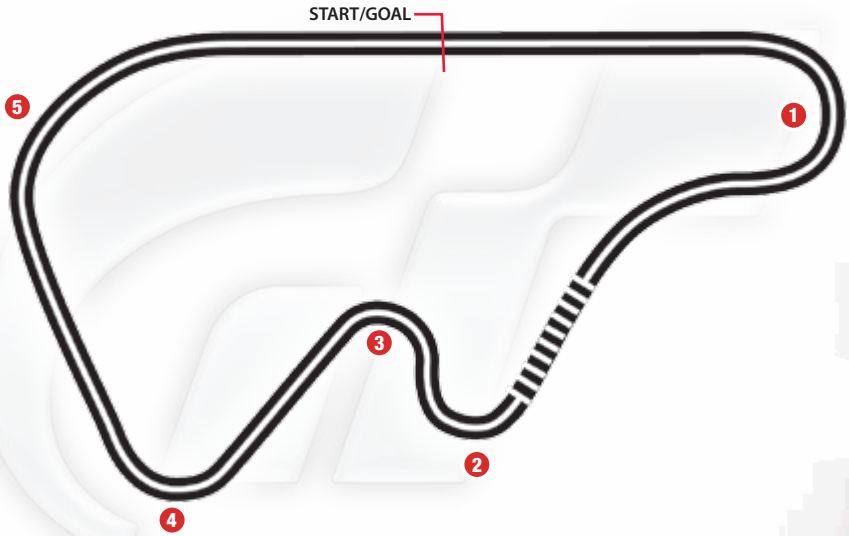
High Speed Ring (Reverse)

Tuning Guide: The track itself is short, but you're doing a lot of accelerating here. The gearing should be semi-tall, but don't go overboard—it's not likely you'll be going over 200 mph here. High-speed stability is vital, so tweak the downforce settings on your aerodynamic parts. In addition, you'll want to minimize drag, so drop the ride height down low—you won't be hitting any rough patches or cutting across chicanes here.

Recommended Car: Fast-accelerating, high-powered AWD or RWD.



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Turn 1: This track has freeway-like road space, and it's hard to really muck up the turns. That said, you'll be able get much faster lap times by taking each turn seriously. The first bend is a long, 180-degree sweeper, and it is heavily banked. The keys to these banked turns are knowing when to power out and having the ideal racing line. Drop down to third and avoid staying in the outside lines. Avoid staying too far inside, too, as the banking angle is less pronounced near the edge. Modulate the throttle so that you're always in the inside lane. Past the halfway mark and when you see the bridge ahead, start accelerating. If you hit the gas too early you'll run into the railing on the left side.

Turn 2: This bend is off-camber, meaning it's banked in the opposite direction you'd like. The car will naturally want to drift outside. Brake from the outside and go in, eventually dropping down to third. Hug the inside, going around 70 mph. If you find your car drifting outside, then let off the gas.

Turn 3: Yet another bend, exactly the same as the last except it's going the other direction. The same strategy applies—go into the inside while maintaining 70 mph. The key to this bend is powering out at the right time. Hit the gas exactly at the midway point, provided you're on the inside. This should have your car gradually shift to the outside when stepping on the gas. If your car hasn't drifted all the way to the outer lane, you've hit the gas too late. If you bump into the left wall, then you've punched it too early.

Turn 4: This turn is almost identical to turn 1, except it's shorter. From the outside, cut into the innermost, maintaining a smooth line. Power out after reaching the halfway point, with the aim of drifting to the outside. As you're powering out you should gradually be returning the steering wheel, allowing the tires to focus more on accelerating and less on turning.

TIP: Due to the track's wide lanes, pretty much any time is a passing opportunity, except for turns 2 and 3.

Turn 5: The final bend is easy to maneuver through, but hard to master. You'll want to start from the outside, let off the gas, and cut in. Since the turn will have you drop to fourth gear at the lowest, chances are you won't need to hit the brakes at all. Once you're around the second lane from the inside, apply the gas. The key to this turn is cutting quickly and hitting the gas early. The tightest part of the bend is at the onset, then it loosens up and really gives you room to floor it afterward. How quick you can floor it determines how fast you'll take the home straight. This is the turn that can impact your lap time the most.

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Indianapolis Motor Speedway

Tuning Guide: Because this track has long sweeping turns, a decent amount of camber can go a long way toward getting an edge on the curves. Also, since much of this track will be run in higher gears, you want tall gearing to ensure you don't top out your RPMs too early. Considering the road doesn't have any erratic jumps or kinks, you also can get away with a lower ride height than other tracks, as well as a more aggressive suspension setup.

Recommended Car: Stock cars, RWD or AWD with a focus on max speed and acceleration.

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Turns 1, 2: The first two turns are relatively the most steep of the four, but they only require you to drop down one gear at the most. Do the braking before you hit the turn and leave enough room so that you can turn in before the track actually starts curving. If you're reacting to the turn rather than anticipating, be prepared to scrape along the side wall.

Turn 3: The third turn isn't as sharp as the first two turns, but you still can't get away with just powering through. You can stay in gear, but with slight braking or letting off the accelerator. You may even get away with keeping foot on the gas at all times, but if you end up riding on the outside track as result, you'll be slower. If there's too much traffic to pass on the inside, you can do so here on the outside, provided you've gained enough speed from drafting.

Turn 4: The most gentle of the four turns, turn 4 requires only a momentary letting off the pedal.

You don't want to crash into others, but nudging and brushing against one another is often necessary, especially to defend the inside.

GENERAL TIP 1

Since the turns in this course are relatively mild, the key to winning this is smooth, consistent runs. Passing others cleanly is the skill required here. You want to draft opponents in front of you as much as you can. Stay behind them to get an edge in acceleration. On the downside, drafting can also cause a slight understeer, known as "aero push." Also, avoid going below the inside line (the white line on the inside) at all costs, because the lack of a bank will make your turning speed suffer.

GENERAL TIP 2

Sometimes in the middle corner, you may find that you don't need to apply the steering hard. If you have some room to let up on the steering, don't do so for long because even a brief lapse in steering means your car can veer into the outer wall.

GENERAL TIP 3

On turn exits, if you have room to gradually let off on the steering, do so; at the same time, gradually apply the throttle.

GENERAL TIP 4

If you find yourself outside (to the right) of the ideal line, let off the gas pedal to get more on the inside of the curve. Although you'll lose some speed, the smaller turn radius means you'll be making better time.

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Road Course—Indy

Tuning Guide: With the mammoth home straight, high-performance cars can easily get to speeds exceeding 180 mph. Pile on the power upgrades to make the most of the long stretch. Also, the smoothness of the track and the lack of sudden elevation difference mean stiffer suspension and lower ride heights are favorable.

Recommended Car: RWD or AWD with top-end power.

Turns 1–3 : Finding the perfect braking point is needed for success here. The Driving Line tends to be accurate on this, but you can also use the distance markers to the right side. They're easy to miss because they're so tiny and on the ground, though. Slow down to about 70 mph, downshifting to second. With your foot off the gas, turn in, which should bleed the speed down to 60. Power out as you clip the apex—but with the left-hander immediately following, you'll need to let off the gas again, powering out as you clip the apex of turn 2. Turn 3 is a gentle right-hander, so just keep on the gas.

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Turn 4: The infield is completely flat, so the road won't throw any rude surprises at you. This turn will have you slow down to second gear and power out as you clip the apex. Since the track is wide, you have lots of room to work with.

Turn 5: This shallow right-hander requires little effort to navigate. At most, you'll momentarily let off the throttle, but some cars may be able to just plow right through.

Turn 6: For the most part, turn 6 is a pretty standard 180-degree sweeper. The key is maintaining steady throttle to keep a smooth line through the turn. Since a sharp right-hander immediately follows, don't power out until you've completely cleared the corner—you can't afford to go wide here.

Turn 7: One of the trickier parts of the course, this will feel like a decreasing-radius turn because you can run out of space out of the corner. Slow down to about 50 mph, downshifting to second, and make the bend. The good thing about this section is that there's copious amounts of runoff space. So even if you run too wide and go outside the track, you can just gradually move back in, never losing speed.

Turn 8: The 90-degree right-hander here offers few surprises. Drop down to second, cut in from the outside, clip the apex, and power out. The only thing you'll need to worry about is going too wide out of the corner; you need to be in the middle of the lane for the next pair of tight turns.

Turns 9, 10: Resembling a plumbing trap pipe underneath your sink, this pair of 180-degree turns are the slowest sections of the course. Speeds will drop down to the 30s and 40s, so downshift accordingly. You'll usually want to be in second gear because first gear is harder to control with the torque. Since you're moving slowly here, you can really ride on the curbs to make the bends even shorter. Once you're nearly out of the first turn, cut across diagonally into the inside of the next turn. The second bend might be slightly faster, but not by much. Power out once you're two-thirds of the way out of the corner into the mini-straight.

Turn 11: This final corner leading to the sweeping oval won't call for much braking because you haven't had much time to gain speed after the last turn. Blip the brakes and turn in while in third gear. Your exit speed determines how fast you can go down the home straight, so it can impact your lap time significantly. The rest of the way you can keep your foot on the pedal, but when you start merging with the oval, turn hard to the right to avoid going too wide.

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Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca

Tuning Guide: Since the course doesn't have very long straights, medium gearing is optimal here. Even with a fast-accelerating car, you won't reach more than 160 mph on the final straight. Because of the steep declines and inclines, stay away from very aggressively tuned suspension setups, as you'll find yourself having to constantly wrest control of your car.

Recommended Car: Nimble and balanced MR, FR, or AWD.

Turn 1: Here's a slight left-handed kink that, for most cars, won't require any braking. The tricky part is that it's up a hill, so visibility will be limited (the over-the-hood view might let you see above the crest). Turn in early instead of reacting to the turn—you'll want to start turning from the outside right around the crest. At the start of the race you won't have much speed, but thereafter you'll carrying a fair amount of speed here. The prolonged straight also means this stretch is a good passing opportunity, especially leading into the hairpin.

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Getting a tight turn is extremely important here for good lap times. The Viper ACR quickly fell behind because it was outside. Note the late apex for the second half.

Turn 2: Nicknamed the "Andretti hairpin," this one requires a lot of braking. Don't slack off or delay slowing down or else you'll get dumped into the sandy runoff. You can tackle this either as a double- or single-apex turn, since it has a tightening radius—the single apex is easier to learn but the double is quicker. The Driving Line may not tell you to brake enough, and if you find yourself overshooting the inside of the turn, then brake sooner.

Second gear is where you'll most likely be mid-corner. Start from the outside and brake plenty before turning into the first apex. You'll be carrying more speed at the beginning of the turn than the end. Rather than doing all of the braking at the beginning, you'll turn in first, then brake hard. There are numbered brake markers to that right that you can use for reference. You should never be riding on the outside of the corner, and mid-corner you should be in the left-center of the lane.

The second apex of this turn is late—don't accelerate early or else you'll go too wide. You'll want to start accelerating around the time the inside curb on the last bend comes into view. You have some wiggle room with the rumble strip on the outside out of the corner, but not much.

Since this is a tight late-apex corner, it's also an ideal spot for passing cars, especially if they're early-apexing through it.

Turn 3: Although you don't have much time to gain speed out of the hairpin, you'll still need to slow down a fair amount, usually to the top end of second gear or the middle of third. The key to this is aggressively clipping the inside of the turn. If you're not hitting the inside edge, you're probably going too wide (and possibly too fast). Power out as you round the turn, but there's not too much runoff space here—you'll probably want to ride on the rumble strips a bit though for that extra speed. After passing the giant Yokohama tire arch, the next turn fast approaches.

Turn 4: A similar turn to turn 3, except this right-hander will be at a slightly faster speed—probably a gear higher. Nevertheless, you'll still need to brake before hitting the turn. Again, the key is hitting the inside curb before powering out. If you power out with plenty of room on the left side, you've hit the gas too late; if you hit the gas and start running off, you've hit it too early.

Turn 5: It's easy to run along the outside of this turn if you don't slow down enough. And running wide is a double whammy on this bend, since the more outside you go, the more off-camber the road becomes. On the very inside it's banked slightly, which gives you an edge. Hit the brakes and downshift at least a gear or two so that you can clip the curb. The apex will be around than the middle of the bend—get close to the stripes on the side but don't touch them. Power out as you clear the apex, but again, keep an eye on how much runoff you have to work with.

Turn 6: At first glance, this turn looks similar to the previous, but is much faster. You'll still need to hit the brakes some, but overcompensate and you'll find the competition quickly zooming past you. A lot of time can be lost if you think of this turn as the same as the last. The approach can be tricky since you do have a blind crest. The braking point will usually be right past the pedestrian bridge overhead. The apex is around the middle of the turn, and you can power out relatively quick due to the incline and the fact that there's more rumble strip on the outside. Like the last turn, the closer you can get to the inside curb, the faster you'll be.

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The Rahal Straight, Turn 7: Don't relax just because you've hit a straight—there's an important kink to take note of before you tackle the infamous corkscrew, and it requires setting up here. As you're climbing the hill, you see a large overhead sign. The track there has a slight right-handed kink, and you'll want to turn in from the left side of the road to the right. You'll see an isolated oak tree straight ahead, which is what you want to use as your reference point of aligning your car before the kink. The left side has a curb that you can ride close to in order to set up for the next turn. This kink is absolutely essential—ignore it and you'll be in an awkward angle to take on the corkscrew, which can spell disaster.

The over-the-hood view gives a huge advantage here because of its better vantage point on the upcoming bend.

Turn 8: Once you've positioned yourself with the kink, it's time to slam the brakes. You'll be doing the braking at the top of the hill, where you can't even see the bend. Don't wait until you see the curve or else you'll slam hard into the barriers in front. You should be in second gear when taking the turn. And in spite of the "S" shape of the turn, you really want to take it in a straight line. Cut in early for the initial left-hander, clipping the apex. Point you car so that it'll clip the right-hander's apex straight on.

With more stable cars you can punch the throttle on the way down and even out of the corner, but most cars will require some throttle finesse. Once you've cleared the right-hander, you can accelerate out toward the right side, setting up for the next turn.

Aim for the oak tree directly in front of you and draw a straight line down from the top of the hill.

Turn 9: A surprisingly fast banked turn, this one requires only light braking at the beginning. Since it's a small sweeper, the apex will be late. Clip the inside right where you see the striped curb (the closer to it, the better), and then you'll be able to power out very quickly toward the right. Carry too much speed going in and you'll be riding on the outside the whole time, so don't get leadfooted until you're positioned to aggressively hit the apex.

Turn 10: This fairly straightforward right-hander can be taken at faster speeds. There's a brake marker on your left, and you'll usually want to start braking somewhere around the second marker. Turn in, clipping the apex, and as you're powering out, be mindful that the lanes at Laguna aren't too wide. If you power out early, you'll quickly run into the sand.

Provided your car is stable enough, you can cut the corner of this turn and make the angle less extreme.

Turn 11: This tight 110-degree left-hander is easy, provided you do two things. First, you'll need plenty of time to brake. Staying on the right side (outside) of the lane, brake hard until you've reached second gear. The apex on this corner is very late due to the extreme angle. You'll have to hold off for a long time before hitting the accelerator—at least until you're pointing straight at the beginning of the outside curb on your left.

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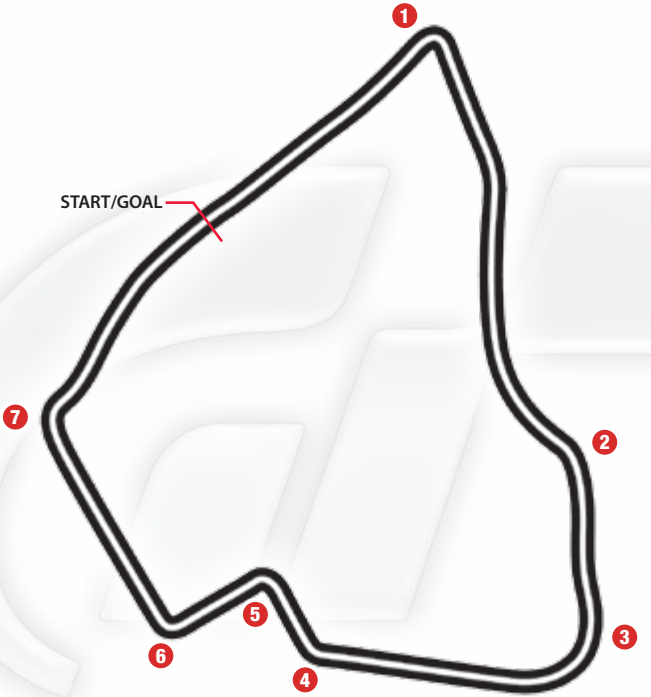
London

Tuning Guide: Chassis responsiveness is the key factor to being successful here. If you're driving an old jalopy, now might be a good time to fork over the bucks for a body rigidity upgrade at the GT Auto Shop. A chassis with play in the frame reduces the efficiency of the suspension damping effectively. A little toe in at the front, or stiffer sway bars can improve initial response into the turn.

Recommended Cars: Maneuverable, lightweight cars. Zippy FF cars are in their element here.



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Turn 1: This is a very slow right-hander, so be prepared to hit the brakes early. Drop down to second, cutting into the inside. Hold back on the throttle until after you clear the apex. Aim for speeds in the low 40s. You can clip the curb here, but go in too deep and the balance of the car will be upset. Don't get carried away here.

Turn 2: The track map may not give you the warning, but the next set of turns is a chicane that will have you take a hard left, followed by a hard right. Before entering the turn, let off the gas. Since you didn't have much time to accelerate from the last corner, you shouldn't need to change gears. You can't power out after the initial bend because the right-hander immediately follows. Right at the apex of the left-hander, hit the brakes and slow down to third gear. Clip the apex and power out.

Turn 3: After a very brief straight, you'll encounter a small, blind sweeper. Drop down to second, ride along inside till you reach the halfway point, then power out. Power out too quickly and you'll drift to the side, setting you up poorly for next turn.

Turn 4: This angular kink will be slower than you might expect because of its nonexistent runoff space. Slow down to second gear, and cut in from the outside in. The apex is right next to a steel railing, so make sure not to bump into it. Hold off on the gas through the bend because you need to be on left side of road for the hard left coming up.

Turn 5: You haven't had much time to position yourself from the last bend and into this 90-degree left. You'll still be in second gear coming into the braking point, but you'll nevertheless have to slow down a lot to take this turn. Part of the difficulty is the narrowness of the road; with a two-lane track, there isn't much room for error.

Turn 6: Another 90-degree turn, this time to the right. Since you've had time to set up, this one will be easier than the last. Again, go from the outside, braking down to second, and then cutting in. Clip the apex, powering out as you climb over the curb.

Turn 7: The final bend is another right-handed turn, roughly the same speed as the last except it is followed by a small chicane. Ignore the chicane, climbing over the curbs you accelerate straight ahead to the finish line.

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London (Reverse)

Tuning Guide: Your philosophy in tweaking your ride will be the same for reverse as the forward course. Focus on the responsiveness of the car. Since you're twisting and turning in rapid succession, a chassis that's not rigid will be slow to respond. Invest in a body rigidity upgrade, or purchase rigidity parts at the Tuning Shop. There's very little elevation change here, so stiffer suspension settings can work—so long as your car doesn't get jittery.

Recommended Cars: As for the forward course, choose cars with high power-to-weight ratio, typically FF, FR, or MR.

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Turn 1: This bend is harder in reverse because the chicanes can get in the way of your braking. Avoid hitting the chicanes leading into the turn at all costs because your braking distance will suffer greatly while riding over them. The trick here is to try to keep to as straight a path possible, avoiding swerving in between the curbs. Brake in a straight line, dropping down around to 40 mph. Stay in second gear throughout the bend, powering out relatively early; unlike the rest of the course, the road here expands to a four-lane path.

Turn 2: How quick you can take this turn ironically depends on how low you're willing to drop in speed. Because the road narrows once again to two lanes, you cannot power out quickly. Therefore, this bend will be a lot slower than turn 1. Slow down to at least 40 mph when rounding the bend, barely clipping the apex. Power out past the apex, making sure you don't go wide too quickly.

Turn 3: A similar hard right, but the difference here is that it's leading into a mild decline, which means your turn-in will be more responsive and slightly prone to oversteer. Power out late, ensuring that you don't drift to the left side of the road; you'll need to be in the center for this next bend.

Turn 4: A challenging turn only because there's so little clearance on the sides. From the center, cut into the apex, making sure to get close to—but not close enough to hit—the steel rail that's snug against the curb. Power out only when you're sure you're not going to drift into the wall on the right side.

Turn 5: Looks are deceiving, mainly because this left-hander will slow you down much more than you'd expect. Drop down to second gear from the outside and cut in, navigating the inside at a speed of around 65 mph. The road is wider here, leaving you more room to power out.

Turn 6: You haven't had much time to accelerate out of the last corner, so this chicane requires only very slight braking. Brake and cut in, getting close to the inside of the first apex. Since it's an increasing-radius chicane, you can power out from the first bend.

Turn 7: The final turn is a hard left, and is all about having the best braking point. There are plenty of objects on the sidelines to use as a brake marker, such as road signs or onlookers waving giant flags, so find the one that best suits your car. Drop down to second gear, moving tightly along the inside curb. If you find yourself riding on the outside, either you came in too fast, or you're hitting the gas too quickly in the corner. The home stretch has a wide road, but you can still run out of space quick.

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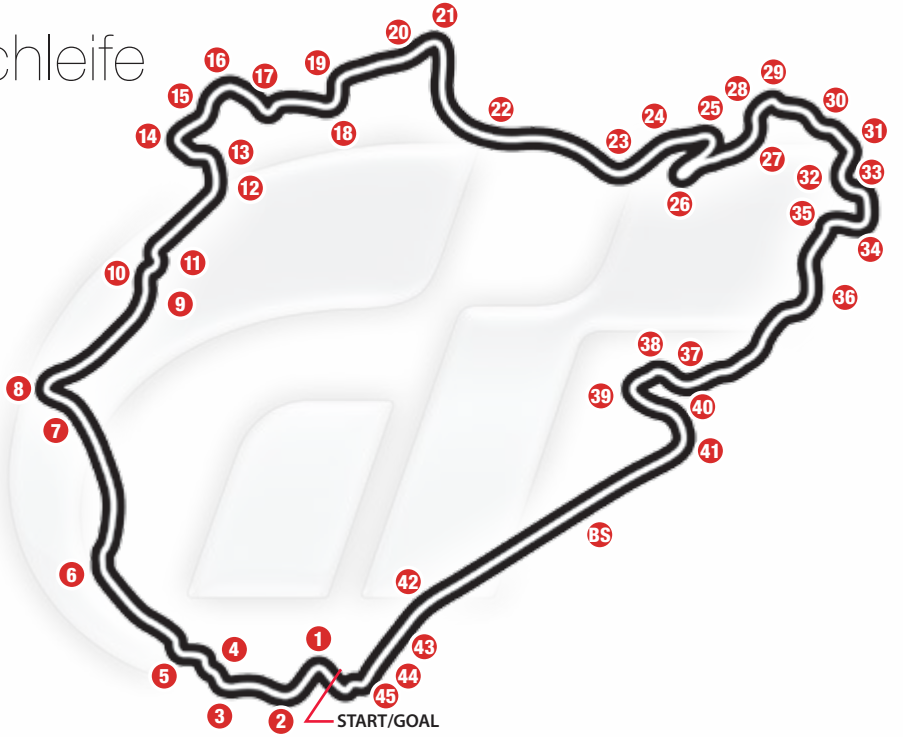
Nürburgring Nordschleife

Tuning Guide: Unfortunately, given the variety of turns, elevation changes, and speeds of this course, there's no easy, "killer" setup for your car. Your vehicle will have to be good at everything, so avoid extreme setups. Don't make the suspension too stiff, or all the little bumps and divots on the course will make your car jittery. Don't drop the car too low, or else it'll keep bottoming out, especially on turns like Karusell. Your car will thank you for using lots of downforce, especially given how many turns it must take at high speeds. Adjust your gearing so that you'll be able to max out your speed at the straightaway; if you're not able to get to the rev limiter on your last gear, then make the ratios closer.

Recommended Car: High-end exotic sports cars. FR and MR can get quick times, but the experience is a lot easier in AWD.



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Turn 1: This hard bank to the left happens immediately after the race begins, and you'll need to brake hard. The game may recommend that you drop down to first, but if your car has enough torque in second, don't. The turn is cambered and you'll find some help from that, and it's also a decline to the apex. Hence, the turn-in will be easy, but don't go in too deep or climb over the curb. The apex itself is a bit past the halfway point, so hold off on accelerating until you can see past the bend. The next kink is a mild one, so you won't need to let off the gas at all.

Turn 2: The next bend will most likely require you to drop in speed before taking the turn. Hit the brakes before you start turning and go from the outside in. Once you're about to pass the apex you can get on the gas very quickly—if you're slow to let on the gas you'll lose some time. Past this turn you'll face a mild left-kink, which you can power through. But be ready to hit the brakes for the hook.

TIP: You'll almost never want to slam the brakes while turning hard on Nordschleife. When you're going over 120 mph, your tail gets unstable very quick.

Turn 3: The red-striped wall in the distance up ahead and the curb on the inside will be the signs that you can't just mash the pedal here. The Hocheichen has a hook that is followed in close succession by a chicane, and you'll need to do a lot of turns in quick succession. The initial left-hander will have you drop down a gear or two. Cut in from the outside to the inside. You can't get on the throttle much here because the right-hander that's fast approaching. If you cut into the last turn correctly, you'll already be on the outside for this next turn—cut into the apex aggressively, then power out. Soon following is a set of chicanes, so be on your toes.

Turn 4: The chicanes will have you cut left, right, then left. The first two turns will be taken at about the same speed, and will only have you drop down in velocity slightly, probably staying in the same gear. If your car doesn't accelerate that fast, you may be able to take these by just lifting off the throttle. Hug the inside of the turns at the apexes (which are both in the midpoint of the bend).

The last left sits at the bottom of the hill, sloping up as you approach the late apex and out of the corner. This one banks harder than the previous two, and you will need to slow down right before you turn in. Avoid braking while turning, if you're having to brake while making the bend, you'll most likely miss the turn and spill out into the grass.

Turn 5: A tricky downhill turn, this right-hander is almost like a short sweeper, which is quickly followed by a left turn. For the right bend, brake before cutting in, and stay close to the inside of the curve. Since the next turn will be a kink to the left, you'll want to stay on the right side to position yourself on the outside for the next bend. This allows you to accelerate out of the left-hander quicker. You then have an extended straight that allows you to go blisteringly quick.

CAUTION: Straights are typically seen as ideal passing opportunities, but at the Green Hell that isn't always the case. For example, right before the Flugplatz turn is a little hill where your car will jump. If you're passing to the right as you reach the hill, your car could possibly jump and land into a very poor position for the turn, and even wreck your car in the process.

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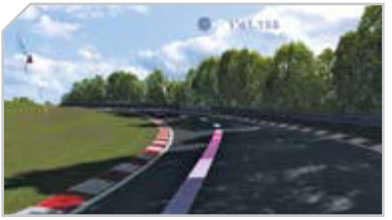
Turn 6: The next turn, called Flugplatz, is where you'll need to hit the brakes is just beyond the crest of a hill. Since you won't see the bend at all while climbing the incline, you'll need to be prepared. It's not a sharp right-hander, but because of the speed you're likely carrying at this point, you'll need to slow down. Brake moderately before turning—possibly dropping a gear—and when making the bend, aim for the midpoint of the inside curb as the apex. You can accelerate out to the outside somewhat safely since there's a rumble strip that serves as a runoff, but it's safer to avoid getting close to the outside edge. A right-handed kink soon follows, for which you won't need to let up on the gas. Beyond these sets of turns you'll have a series of gentle curves that won't require you to let off the accelerator for at least the next 15 seconds.

TIP:

There's a "sweet spot" with the Driving Line for knowing when you're at the right speed to take the turn. As you're braking, the bright red band switches to a light pink—at that point, you're at the ideal speed to let off the gas and start turning.



Start turning before you reach the crest, aiming for the inside curb.

Turn 7: Here's a deceptively deadly left-handed kink that can kill the race if you're not careful. Part of the reason is that the turn is up a blind crest, but also partly because you can't just power through the whole thing. The greatest danger here is that as you reach the crest, your car becomes lighter; hence, you'll likely want to blip the brakes right as you hit the crest to prevent your car from getting unsettled. Worse yet, the Driving Line might not show any indication of slowing down, and you might think you can just power through it—but you can't. As you climb up the hill you will either need to turn hard while coasting without any gas, or do some light to moderate braking at the top. Overshoot it, and you'll ram into the wall going over 150 mph. But get too conservative and your opponents will zip past you.

Turn in early to anticipate the curve and turn hard until you're well past the curve—don't let off just because you hit the apex. The closer you can get to the curb the better, but don't touch it or else it can send your car flying. This section might take a lot of practice ... and an insurance write-off or two.

The apex is just ahead, but you might even be able to start accelerating from here.

Turn 8: Soon following that adrenaline-pumping, high-speed kink is a much slower right-hander. Because you've been on a high-speed binge all this time, it can be hard to slow down the pace. Brake hard going straight down on the outside—down to around second gear, then let off the gas and coast into the turn while turning hard. Stay on the inside, but avoid touching the curb. Due to the banked angle, you can actually power out very quickly, even before hitting the apex (which is about two-thirds of the way through the bend). It's easy to overshoot the turn in the beginning, but become too conservative with the throttle and you'll lose out on the straight. Finding the right point to throttle out will just take practice.

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Turn 9: After another stretch of straights, you'll find the road dips down and then back up with a left kink. Like a lot of other corners, this one is blind, just beyond the crest and to the right. Here you can use the curb on your right side as your braking marker. As soon as you reach the beginning of the curb, you're entering the braking point. From the outside, drop down a gear and cut into the left just before you reach the crest, anticipating the bend.

Turn 10: Past the left-handed kink, the road straightens and flattens out, and you'll be faced with a set of two chicanes, with the second one being tighter and slower than the first. From the outside, gradually turn into the bend, blipping the brakes and dropping down slightly in speed before taking the first right-hander.

Turn 11: Soon after the right you'll be face with a hard left. At this point you'll need to drop down to second gear before taking the bend. It's critical that you're slow enough to cut into the apex, which enables you to be on the left side (the outside) of the lane for the next bend.

The right-hander is at a similar angle to the left, but it's slightly less banked and no longer on an incline, so the entry and exit speeds will be slightly higher. Avoid clipping the curbs on the apex because they'll make your inside tires off-camber, thus making the transitions more rough and dicey. You'll then have another 10 or more seconds of a straight.

TIP: There are sections where the Driving Line may suggest you brake while turning. In most cases, don't—drop your speed before taking the turn.

Turn 12: A tame left-hander that doesn't need much to get through, but nonetheless you will have to brake enough to drop down a gear. The apex will be slightly later than the middle of the bend, so watch out with when you power out.

Turn 13: Not long after the last bend is this moderate left-hander. Drop down yet another gear for this one, and cut in aggressively into the inside, with your inside tires brushing against the inside curb. As you climb the hill and pass the apex, the road becomes off-camber very briefly, and your car will tend to drift to the right. Stay on the left side of the road for the slight right kink, which you can power through so long as you took the initial left bend correctly.

Turn 14: Due to the banking on the bend, you can take this turn surprisingly quickly, in spite of the tight angle. It's also one of the few times you might get away with some hard braking while turning. Nonetheless, you will need to drop down to second gear. Because of the camber in the turn, you can power out quickly, from around the midpoint of the corner.

Turn 15: This little kink, called Metzgesfeld, requires a bit of concentration to master. Depending on your car, you may need to tap the brakes before turning in, but once into the bend you should be able to slam the gas most of the way through.

Turn 16: The Kallenhard does take some braking, in spite of the seemingly smooth shape on your minimap. From the outside, brake and then cut in. The gentle radius means you can power out pretty quickly, after clipping the apex (which is at the center of the turn).

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The Driving Line suggests a more standard mid-apex. You can experiment with a much later apex by braking and turning in late.

Turn 17: This sharp bend requires you to drop down a lot in speed. Initially, the right-hander doesn't seem that bad. You'll most likely need to drop down a gear, but be careful because it's somewhat off-camber initially. From the outside, cut in so that you're on the right side of the lane for the hard left.

For the tight left-hander, you'll want to brake late and have a late apex here, so that the exit will have a gentler angle than the initial turn-in. Brake down to second, cutting in late and then throttling out. You can cut across the striped curb and into the inside grassy area if your car can handle it. If done right, you won't need to adjust much for the subsequent right-hander and power out smoothly. Avoid passing cars here because hitting the gas on a downhill could get your tail very loose.

Turn 18: Not too technically demanding, this turn has you drop down to third, cutting across in a semi-late apex. The road does go uphill slightly mid-corner, so your car might display some slight understeering tendencies here.

Turn 19: With the slight banking in the corner, you might be able to take this turn a bit quicker than you'd expect. From the outside, cut in, lightly clipping the striped curb with your inside tires. You'll most likely be in third, and be able to power out once you clip the apex. A little straight will follow.

TIP: Avoiding touching the grass at all costs, especially when driving at higher speeds. You can lose control instantly and crash.

Turn 20: This nameless little kink is surprisingly dicey. And here's an interesting fact: A famous fatal crash here ended Formula One's presence on Nordschleife. When turning in from the right side of the lane, cut into the left for the kink and stay on the inside. The Driving Line here suggests staying on the inside past the apex for good reason; the road is very bumpy and uneven here, and even worse if you're caught on the right side of the road. Going wide here with the poor road conditions could end your race with a crash and a bang.

Turn 21: Due to the bend here being surprisingly long, and due to its increasing radius through the corner, you'll want to brake late here, with a late apex. Doing so allows you to carry more speed on the exit, which will greatly improve your lap times. Get down to third, then cut in. Don't be too hasty on the throttle, or else you'll rendezvous with the cold, hard steel railing to the outside. There's some runoff space here with the rumble strip, but you'll want to avoid using it if you can.

Turn 22: This little left-handed kink at Kesselchen is worth mentioning, only because people may wonder if they need to let off at all. And you don't—just keep powering. Just don't react to the turn—turn in to get close to the apex to give yourself room to drift to the outside.

Turn 23: Soon after, you'll have this bigger left-handed turn, which is one of the more difficult bends to master on this course. Surprisingly, you don't have to brake as hard as the Driving Line may suggest, in part because of the incline. Use the curb/rumble strip on your right as your braking marker. You may need to drop down only one gear for this turn, but you must be aggressive and bold. Brake prior to the turn and cut in, quickly powering out after hitting the apex. There's a small cobblestone rumble strip on the outside, but it's so tiny that it's better to just avoid getting too wide.

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Turn 24: Another hair-raising kink; you may or may not be able to get away with lead-footing it. The risk and reward here are tremendous. So, when first learning the ropes of the course, you might want to just lift off the gas slightly when turning in. Later on, with more confidence and the proper setup, you can most likely floor it.

Turn 25: The Steilstrecke turn is a slow, increasing-radius turn that's the tightest at the beginning. As such, it's also one that favors braking late and taking a late apex. Slow down to second and aggressively turn from the outside in. Although the minimap doesn't show it, the road narrows at the end, which in effect tightens the turn; so when powering out, modulate the throttle a bit if you're getting too wide out of the corner. You can't simply punch the throttle out of the apex.

TIP: Nordschleife cannot be mastered in one or two sittings. The key is to first memorize the track while taking it slower. Be conservative with braking points just to learn the course. Then as you get familiar with the different sections, start picking up the speed.

Turn 26: One of the most iconic and well-known turns on the course, the Karusell (or Carousel in English) is steeply banked at 30 degrees, and has blocky, bumpy slabs of concrete that you must navigate through. Overcome your fear of riding in the bumpy inside—with the steep bank it'll be much quicker than the flat, outside edges. You'll be dropping down to second gear here, and maintaining a fairly consistent speed throughout.

The one key thing to know about this turn is that it decreases in radius at the very end, meaning you can drift out to the outside very easily if you hit the gas too early. Because of that, you'll want to think of this turn as having a very late apex, and accelerate out only when you're just about to clear the turn.

Turns 27, 28: Not long after the Karusell do you stumble upon yet another blind turn, up a hill. Given the incline, if you're just going by the Driving Line you might use too much braking here. Nonetheless, you don't want to go into this corner too hot because then you'll be ill-positioned for the right-hander that's quickly approaching. Cut back to the right, powering through since the radius of the turn is similar to the initial left-hander.

Turn 29: Right as you're flooring it out of the last bend, you'll come across a hard right in what is the highest elevation point on the track. The turn at Hohe Acht isn't that tight—roughly in the third gear range—but the road is slightly bumpy and off-camber in some portions, so it's not exactly straightforward, either. Power out right at or just past the halfway point.

Punch the gas early, and you'll be on the inside leading into the next turn—instead of the outside where you should be, as shown in this screenshot.

Turn 30: Before you've had a chance to breathe, you'll bump into the Wipperman S-curves, a challenging set of bends that are more about coordination and control than power. You're going downhill, and at times off-camber, making these seemingly gentle bends harder than they look. Blip the brakes for the first bend and stay in fourth gear (or whatever the recommended gear is for your car—for high-end cars it's typically fourth). You won't want to use the gas much here because the decline means you're already prone to picking up speed.

You should be close to clipping every apex, but never hitting the striped curb. Don't punch the gas until you've made it past the last right-handed bend, or else you'll go wide and be forced to slow down—or get pushed off the road and into the grass.

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Turn 31: The Green Hell is notorious for its blind turns, and here's yet another one. It's going up a steep hill, so although you do need to brake, it won't be as much as you'd expect—depending on your car, you might even be able to stay in your current gear; some will want to drop down to third. Although the Driving Line in the game is conservative with the corner exit (it doesn't have you go to the outside, but somewhat more in the middle), you could power out toward the cobblestones if you're bold or suicidal enough. Just be sure you don't touch the green, and that you quickly start moving back to the right side of the road for your next turn.

When the red on the Driving Line changes to light pink, you know you're at a good speed to take the turn.

Turn 32: This is actually two sets of left turns, with the first being the tightest and therefore the most difficult. From the outside, brake to lower RPMs in fourth or high RPMs in third, then cut in. At the apex you can hit the gas, and since the second left isn't as tight as the first, you can floor it through the whole section. Just watch out with the second bend though, as it is off-camber, and not quite the cake walk it seems.

Turn 33: This angular right-hander called Brunnchen will have you cut in diagonally and dropping down to third. Given its bank and its being on a downhill, it shouldn't be difficult to point the nose of your car in the right direction. The apex is at the middle of the curve, which is where you can power out. The track is, for once, somewhat generous with the runoff space, so you can go a little wide without wiping out here.

Turn 34: In contrast to the first turn of Brunnchen, the second goes up a hill. Your car will tend to understeer, and your corner speed will be slightly slower here than the last, though you'll still be in the same gear. Given that the corner still curves as you reach the crest, you'll need to watch out for more understeer as the car lightens up top. There is cobblestone runoff here, but like other corners, you don't want to rely on it.

Turn 35: The Eiskurve, or "ice bend," gets its name for the tendency for moisture to freeze easier here than in other sections of the track. Fortunately you don't need to worry about that or unwelcome damp spots on this track. That said, turn 35 is up a hill and a bit off-camber, so your car can understeer here. You can cut in very briefly before hitting the brakes. Ride along the inside of the bend and don't hit the gas too early, or else you won't get a straight shot out of the subsequent right-handed kink. Hit the throttle only when you're almost finished with the left corner.

TIP:

This straight after turn 35 is one of the few places where you can safely cut across grass, since it's a straight shot. Just don't make a steering correction in the middle of it. (In real life this would probably kill your suspension though.)

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Right around here you'll encounter an unwelcome mini-jump. Be sure you hit the brakes beforehand or you'll plunge into the wall ahead.

Turn 36: At the 17 km marker you'll come across Pflanzgarten I, a curve complicated by a dip near the braking point. Your car can hop a little here, so you'll need to brake a little in advance to compensate for difficulty in slowing down.

Since the corner is a double right, as you climb up the crest you cannot power out and drift to the outside as you normally would. Stay right-center, clipping the second apex at the halfway point of the second bend just before the crest, then hammer the throttle.

Turn 37: This banked turn doesn't look like much, and may not be a big deal for most. Nevertheless, because of the bumpy road here, your racing line should be very smooth and straight leading into the turn. You'll brake and drop down one gear before cutting into the inside. After making the bend, don't immediately throttle out, because you'll need to keep to the road's right side to position yourself for the upcoming left-hander.

Turn 38: The left-hander would be a walk in the park, except that it's on a blind crest. Thankfully you see much of it before taking on the turn, and it's not too difficult so long as you drop down to third gear. The turn-in point will be right around where the side road merges to the track. From there, cut from the outside in. As you reach the crest, you might want to let off the steering so you don't drift wide and into the sandy outskirts.

Turn 39: Turn 39 is another iconic turn reminiscent of the Karusell, except it will be a little quicker and you can throttle out quicker, too. But like Karusell, the rough concrete slabs are the best path to take. That said, the corner exit is where reality and simulation differ. Whereas drivers typically stay on the inside and follow the uneven slabs all the way through in real life, in the game, the throttle-out point is much quicker. Why the difference? Because suddenly transitioning out of the slabs can put a strain on the car in real life. Since it won't in-game, you can power out once you're halfway out of the bend.

Turn 40: You haven't had much time to accelerate from the last turn, especially since this kink is up a hill. Thus you shouldn't need to do much more than blip the brakes here. Tap the brakes before turning in and hit the gas at the apex, which is halfway through the bend.

Turn 41: This sweeper before the ultra-long straight will have you let go of the gas pedal at most, but you do want to ride the inside. Hit the gas around the halfway point and keep your foot planted for the rest of the bend—you want to get as much speed as possible for this final straight.

Back Straight: A giant straight second only to the Mulsanne straight on Circuit de la Sarthe (before the joy-kill chicanes were added). This straightaway will test the upper limits of your car's speed. (It's also a great place to do top-speed testing for your car when tuning, too.) When passing cars, be sure to do so without erratic movements. Playing bumper cars at 200 mph might enable you to beat the person in front of you, but three more might pass you in the process. There's a little left-handed kink right behind an overhead bridge; you won't need to let off the gas at all—just turn in a bit ahead of the bend.

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Turn 42: Easily the most frightening part of the course, this left-handed kink at Tiergarten has you screaming in at over 180 miles per hour for high-end sports cars. Worse yet, the road narrows, which means you have even less margin for error. On top of that, there's a divot on the left side approaching the kink. Cut in from the outside, letting off the throttle as you climb the hill. Break to the left hard before the turn starts, or else you'll hit it too late. You shouldn't have lost much speed at the kink, perhaps about 10 to 15 miles per hour. Much slower cars will be able to take these kinks without any throttle modulation—but if your car tops 200 mph, be prepared for white-knuckled maneuvering.

Turn 43: The second bend up top will have you drop further down in speed, typically a gear. So your speed should be gradually winding down, but still pretty quick—at least in fifth gear on a six-speed transmission. And this is one bend you especially don't want to go hot into because the next right-hander will have you drop way down in speed.

Turn 44: If you took the last turn perfectly and didn't wildly veer off into the green, you should now be on the outside for this slow right-hander. Slow down dramatically to second gear, cutting into the apex. The turn itself is small, and you can power right out. That said, stay on the ideal racing line, even if that means letting off the throttle momentarily.

Turn 45: At long last, you've reached the final turn of this epic track. And it's no snoozer, either; with the steel railing immediately to your right, it's hard to hit the apex on the corner without hitting the railing in the process. Take it in second gear, but keep in mind that it's going to be a slow second gear, most likely below 50 mph at the apex. Power out to finish the lap, and take pride in knowing that you've finished the hardest course in the game.

WHERE'S THE END OF THE TRACK?

Real-life lap times of Nordschleife sometimes use different starting and stopping points for safety reasons. Most recent tests done by automakers have the laps end 200 meters short of the starting point.

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Nürburgring 24H

Tuning Guide: Since this is essentially a track that connects the northern loop and the GP/F course, the tuning guide is the same as for Nordschleife. Refer to the Nordschleife tuning guide for more details.

Recommended Car: Like Nordschleife, you'll want high-end exotic sports cars. FR and MR can get quick times, but the experience is a lot easier in AWD. In endurance races tire longevity becomes an issue, so pick a car you can comfortably drive without thrashing the tires quickly.

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Turn 1: The Nürburgring 24 course is a mix of the full northern section (Nordschleife), and most of Nürburgring GP/F, minus three or four turns. As such, it's long—very long. The first right-to-left-hand bend is initially similar to turn 1 on the GP course, except midway it veers off to the left. The braking point is the same as the GP/F hairpin, and your speed through both turns will be slow—roughly in the same ballpark as the speed at which you'd take the hairpin. You can hit the accelerator a bit as you round the first hairpin apex, but you'll have to let off the gas very quickly because the left-hander is very tight.

Turns 2–8: Refer to turns 5 through 11 in the GP/F track strategy for driving tips for the rest of the GP portion of the Nürburgring 24 course—the bulk of the course is identical. That said, the chicane at turn 8 is slightly different and less angled, allowing you to carry more speed.

Turn 9: Although it looks similar to the chicane in the GP/F course, Turn 9 is at a softer angle. You'll still need to slow down into second gear, but you can carry up to 70 mph through the bends.

Turn 10: From here, the Nürburgring 24 course diverts from the regular GP/F course again, and has you take a sharp left rather than a sweeping right. The corner is on an incline, and is slow—you'll be hovering around second gear for most of the turn. The apex is very late, right before you reach the crest of the hill. Because the road is narrow here, don't power out until after you hit the late apex, or else you'll probably slam into the pit-lane wall.

Turns 11–54: From here on out is the full Nordschleife course. Refer to the start of the Nordschleife track guide, and read on until you reach turn 44. Only the last turn is different from the Nürburgring 24. Instead of the final sharp right-hander from Nordschleife, the track continues going straight.

Home Straight: After snaking through the arduous bends of Green Hell, you'll climb up the hill past the mammoth straight—but instead of making the hard right by the pit lane, you'll go straight through to the GP portion of the track.

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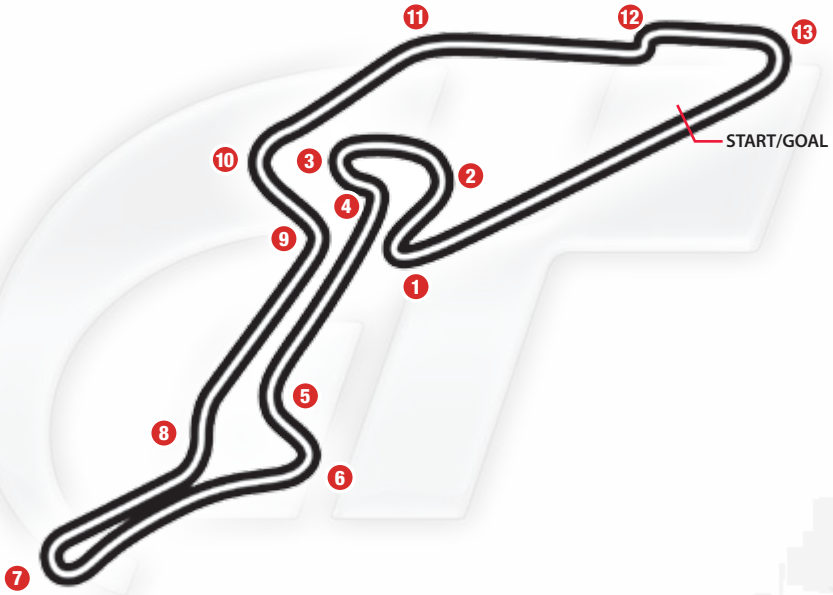
Nürburgring GP/F

Tuning Guide: Although there are elevation changes, the track is pretty smooth throughout, and you may be able to get away with stiffer suspension settings. The course does have its share of high-speed straightaways, so optimize gearing so that you're not bouncing off the rev limiter (but don't make them too tall, either). Most turns are done at moderate speeds, so increasing the downforce may not yield as much positive result as on other tracks.

Recommended Car: A powerful all-arounder with versatile capabilities. RWD or AWD.



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Turn 1: Following a long, initial straight, this hairpin provides a great overtaking opportunity, especially if your brakes can stop rubber quicker than the competitors. Tuck your nose to the inside when you're slowing down if there's traffic—there usually is at the start of the race. You can also clip the apex to make a tighter turn, going on the inside of your opponents.

Since you're blazing down from high speeds and making a very tight turn, you'll need lots of time to slow down. Hit the brakes past the right-handed kink, and slow down to second gear. As with other tracks, the game might suggest first gear, but with most cars the second gear has enough torque to carry you through.

Turn 2: Not long after the first turn is a gentle left-handed sweeper. Since you haven't had much time to accelerate out of the first turn, you're not carrying much speed here and won't need to do much braking. It's a constant-radius turn so the apex will be at the middle. As you hit the apex, start accelerating out, but make sure you don't go too wide. You'll want to be on the outside for the next turn, but not enough to eat the grass on the sidelines.

Turn 3: This a tighter, 180-degree sweeper, that should be tackled similarly to the previous turn. The apex is also in the middle, but unlike turn 2, you won't be able to just hammer the throttle on exiting because of a sharp right-hander that immediately follows. As you accelerate out, don't give throttle to the point where you're on the outside—you'll want to be on the middle of the road to set up for the next bend.

Turn 4: As you're accelerating out of the last turn, you'll have to quickly tap the brakes for this 90-degree right-hander. The apex will be in the middle, and there's a fair amount of runoff space here, so it's hard to careen out of control. That said, you'll still want to wait on the throttle until after you hit the apex.

Turn 5: From the last turn there's a bit of straight, which allows you to gain speed. Prepare to lose a lot of it for this turn, and if you delay in slowing down at all you'll be frolicking in the sand and forfeiting the race. The side roads to the right and cones on both sides can be used as references for the braking point. For faster cars, the braking point will be just before the road. The turn itself is straightforward: apex in middle, clip it, start to accelerate out. Since there's a sharp turn ahead, be prepared to slow down again.

Use the side road as a braking point marker.

Turn 6: Since you don't have time to go on the outside for this sharp right-hander, you'll be tackling the turn from around the middle of the road. Hit the brakes before you start turning, and maintain a line close to the inside. The apex is once again in the middle; start accelerating after you reach it. Don't clip the inside curb on this turn, though—because of its steep angle your tires will be off-camber if you step over the stripes. This turn has a fair amount of runoff, and there's not a turn in sight for awhile, so don't be timid about punching the gas pedal here.

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The braking point is everything here. For high-performance rides, it's just beyond the large rectangular asphalt to the left.

Turn 7: After building up some decent speed, you'll be facing a hairpin turn. The turn itself is conventional, so the trick to tackling this successfully is having a great braking point. Again, the Driving Line may be a good reference point, but may not squeeze out every last tenth of a second. There are a lot of rectangular asphalt patterns to the side, and these make great referencing points for braking. Since the turn is actually sharper than 180 degrees, the apex will be later than the middle, maybe two-thirds of the way through the corner. Like the last turn, the curb on the inside is sharply angled, so you don't want to touch it.

Turn 8: Number 8 is actually a set of two turns; both are relatively high-speed. You don't need to drop down in speed much for the first left-hander, but you can't just power through it either, or else you'll run off the road. Blip the brakes a bit before the turn, and from the outside cut in. The inside curb here is a bit angled so you don't want to clip it much. The key is finding the right speed and turning in early enough from the outside.

For the second bend, you'll hug the inside and accelerate out. Since it's less angled than the first turn, you can pretty much keep your foot on the throttle throughout.

Turn 9: Mucking up this turn can cost you the whole race, so be very careful on this one. Because the curve is on a hill, the turn itself is pretty easy—it's just a matter of getting the braking point right. There are a couple visual markers you can use for your braking point, including the overhead walkway, and some signs to the right side. The apex to this turn is in the middle, and you can power out as soon as you touch the curb. As you accelerate toward the outside, start moving back toward the left side of the road to prepare for the next turn.

Turn 10: Landing in the sand on any course is never a pleasant experience, which is why you want be on your toes for turn 10. Just be sure you brake enough, usually decelerating down one gear. Again the apex is in the middle, and with the ample runoff space, once you clear the corner, you can accelerate aggressively right out.

Turn 11: This is a mild kink but it's worth noting since at this point you'll be zooming down at high speed. With most cars you won't need to let go of the gas at all, but you do have to get the timing right and anticipate the turn. If you find yourself falling out to the outside of track, first see whether you have the right racing line down. Often, when you run off the road in situations like these, it's because you're turning too late.

Flat curbs are great for cutting corners—literally.

Turn 12: Yet another possible race-killer, this hard-angled chicane will stop your car dead in its tracks if you get leadfooted. Because you've had a long time to gain speed, the braking point here is early—probably earlier than you might expect. Also, the wall is very close to the track, so there's little room for error. As the first screenshot shows, if you forget to hit the brakes you'll slam into it head-on. Slow down—way down—for these pair of turns.

Because the off-track surfaces are flat, you can clip the turns quite a bit. But wait till you've cleared the latter bend before powering out, or else you'll go wide. Little blips of the gas are the most you can do in the middle of the chicane.

Turn 13: The final turn of the track may or may not require you to drop down in gear—it depends on the gear ratios of your car as well as how much torque the engine has in mid-RPMs. And with the wider road and wide outside curb, there's also plenty of runoff space, meaning you can carry higher speeds than what the turn radius might suggest. Just stay off of the inside curb—not only is it angled steeply, but there's also a barrier between the track and pit lane, which could spell disaster for your car if it slams into it.

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Nürburgring GP/D

Tuning Guide: Nürburgring GP/D is a shortened version of Nürburgring GP/F, and as such, the tuning principles remain the same. With the heavy braking and accelerating you'll be doing on the tarmac, you won't want much negative camber. There are many straight stretches, but none of them gives you a chance to max out your speed, so gear ratios should be medium.

Recommended Car: Fast-accelerating RWD or AWD.

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Turn 1: The first turn of the course is all about your braking point. The Driving Line comes in very handy here, giving a pretty accurate indication of when you should slam the brakes. While in the braking zone, the road will bend very subtly. You can make very slight corrections with the steering in the middle of braking, but we emphasize *slight*—you cannot turn the wheel hard here or you'll sacrifice braking distance.

Turn 2: One of the trickier sections of the course, this may look like a normal sweeper, but it's actually a decreasing-radius turn (albeit almost unnoticeable). Drop your speed from the initial corner entry at around the halfway point of the turn. The apex is very late here. Power out mid-corner and you'll quickly veer off to the track.

Turn 3: Turn 3 is a fairly consistent-radius, left-handed sweeper, but nonetheless you want a late apex out of this corner, which will allow you to set up for the subsequent right-hander. Your speeds through the bend will be 50 mph or below. As you exit, cut diagonally across the road for turn 4.

Turn 4: This is a standard right-hander. Since you're just coming out of a slow sweeper, you won't need to hit the brakes much for this turn. Blip the brakes and cut into the apex, making sure you trace along the inside edge without actually hitting the curb. This turn will also be in second, but a little faster than the previous turn. You'll be able to power out fairly quickly here, right at the halfway point of the corner.

Turn 5: Instead of going straight ahead for the GP/F, the GP/D turns here in a tight, 180-degree sweeper. Even though it's slightly banked, you'll need to hover around 40 mph to ride along the inside. The road isn't that wide here, so you'll have to hit the throttle about two-thirds of the way into the bend.

Turn 6: The left-hander here can be taken at third gear, but be careful because it's a slightly off-camber turn, and you won't be able to carry too much speed through the bend. Cut into apex while stopping just short of hitting the curb, and accelerate just as you hit the corner's midpoint.

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Turn 7: This sharper right-handed sweeper isn't too kind to those that drift outside. Go in too hot and you'll charge into a sand pit and lose a huge chunk of time. From the outside, cut into the turn at third gear and ride along the inside of bend. Power out past the halfway point.

Turn 8: This right-handed kink is mellow enough to keep your foot on the accelerator the whole time. Just be sure to cut in early, or else it's easy to go outside of the track.

Turn 9: Here's one of the few times where early braking will be preferable to late. Unlike most of the other turns on this track, the curbs at this chicane are flat and wide, meaning you can ride over them. The Driving Line suggests barely touching the inside curbs, but you'll want to aggressively drive right over them. This will shorten the chicane, making you much quicker around the turns.

Turn 10: In spite of the tight radius, this final sweeper surprisingly allows you to carry speed. The Driving Line may suggest a lower gear than necessary, and most high-end cars can take this bend in third gear. Since it's a short bend, you can power out right as you cross the apex, which is at the midpoint of the bend.

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Nürburgring Type V

Tuning Guide: Nürburgring Type V combines the Nürburgring GP/D track with Nordschleife. And although it's slightly shorter than the Nürburgring 24H, the tuning will be the same as all the courses connected with Nordschleife. There are no quick band-aids you can use to make your car faster here. It needs to have everything—high-speed stability, acceleration, tight turning, responsive brakes, and a great top speed. You can use slightly stiffer suspension settings, but you'll really have to avoid going outside the track.

Recommended Car: High-end sports cars, RWD or AWD.

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Turns 1, 2: Like Nürburgring 24H, the first turn in the Type V course will have you skip the initial hairpin, replacing it instead with a sharp-angled chicane. So don't think you can take the bend any faster—the approach and turn-in will be identical to those on the GP/D course. From the outside, cut down your speed until you're in second gear, then cut in when you reach 40 mph. Keep off the gas until you clip the apex at the middle, then briefly apply the gas.

The path abruptly snaps back to the left here, and it's really easy to carry too much speed into this second turn. The closer you can cut it to the steel railing up ahead, the sooner you can power out. The over-the-hood view comes in especially handy here, because it provides the best reference of the dimensions of your car. The worst is the front-bumper view; although it offers the most unobstructed view, it gives you no sense of how close you are to hitting something on the side.

Turn 3: Like the GP/D, the Type V veers to the right with a 180-degree sweeper instead of going straight. It's a slow, tight turn, and you'll be driving around 40 mph to stay close to the inside. Punch the throttle once you're two-thirds into the bend.

Turn 4: Although this left-hander is on an incline, there's plenty of runoff space so it's a pretty stress-free corner. It's also a bit off-camber, which prevents you from quickly powering out. From the outside, cut into apex and get close to the curb. Then, hit the gas as you hit the midpoint of the corner.

Turn 5: This 90-degree right may look similar to the last bend, but it's a lot more dangerous. Be careful with your speed coming into here—if you're too throttle-happy you'll end up in the dreaded sand pit outside. That said, it's not too technical a turn. Just stay inside until you're two-thirds of the way through, then power out.

Turn 6: After a short stretch of a straight, you run into a right-handed kink. Just cut the steering right before the bend and you can keep your racing shoes on the gas pedal the entire time.

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Turn 7: Interestingly, this chicane is slightly different than the GP/D version, and is a bit quicker through the bends. You'll still need to slow down to second gear, but your speed through the apex will hover around 70 mph—a fair amount faster than the speed-killing chicane of the GP tracks.

Turn 8: Following this slow left-hander, you're thrust into the tortuous ordeal fittingly called "Green Hell." This left-handed sweeper will have you drop to around 50 mph. Since the road is narrow here, hit the throttle late. From here, the track transitions to the Nordschleife, so be prepared for 7 or more minutes of white-knuckled action.

Turns 9–52: Refer to the Nordschleife track guide, following turns 1–44. Instead of following turn 45 in Nordschleife, the road zooms straight ahead into the finish line.

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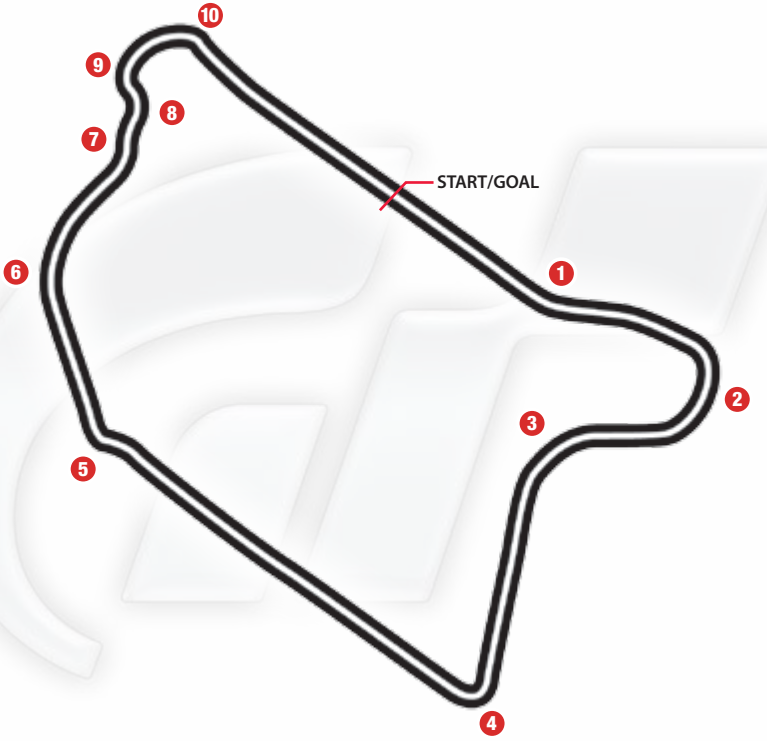
Rome

Tuning Guide: Due to the turns on inclines and declines, stiff springs and shocks may make controlling your car very difficult, especially on turn 8. Soften the suspension enough to give some play when going over hills and curbs. Since the course doesn't have much room for getting a lot of speed, gear ratios can be medium-close.

Recommended Car: Fast-accelerating cars with neutral, high-speed characteristics.



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Turn 1: The first little left may seem like you need to let off the gas but you don't. Timing the turn is everything—when turning, aim for the start of the left-side curb, as though you want to hit it.

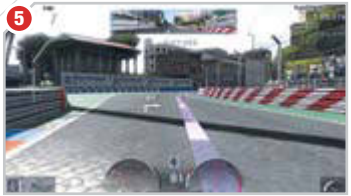
Stay on the outside until passing the 50 m mark, then cut in.

Turn 2: After the first turn, you'll quickly face a double-apex turn. The first part is faster than second, and although you may have the urge to merge to the inside, it pays to wait and stay on the outside more.

In the middle of the corner, either brake slightly or let off the gas pedal before you reach the end of the first curb on the right (or when the Polyphony Digital signs to the right end). If you're too overzealous with the gas pedal here, you'll miss the second apex and swing to the outside. Clip the second apex and accelerate out.

Turn 3: Not along after the pair of turns, you face a fast sweeper. Accelerate through while staying close to the inside. Again, anticipate the turn by aiming your car toward the beginning of the curb and maintain consistent throttle. But don't ride on the curbs, which will slow you down—inside curbs tend to be angled in the opposite camber to what you want and will really mess with your time if you stay on them.

Turn 4: Here we have the sharpest-angled turn of the course, and it'll take some finesse as well as restraint. Brake aggressively to third gear or below, and clip the apex curb. Due to the sharp angle of the turn, you'll have to wait a little while past the apex to start throttling out, or else you run into the wall that sits close beside the track. You can cut the apex very aggressively here, too.



Turn 5: Following the long straight, you'll have a relatively fast right turn. Start on the right side of the road and turn slightly left so you're facing the sharp bend straight-on. If you're not straight and don't make minor steering adjustments while braking, you may lose control quickly because of the decline. Drop down a gear or two for the right-hander. This turn is surprisingly fast, and doesn't need much braking. The key is hitting the inside aggressively, to where you're actually halfway in the green section outside the track. Even though that brings you perilously close to the inside railing, don't hesitate to turn hard—with the speed you're carrying it's harder to bang into them. Once you've past the apex, avoiding riding on the outside curbs, because there's not much space to the left beyond them.

Turns 6, 7: You then have the opportunity to pick up some speed with some mild right turns. Neither of these turns requires any braking—but the second turn may require you to go easy on the gas, only because you'll want to position yourself for tricky left-hander that's quickly approaching.

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Turn 8: Arguably one of the hardest turns in the race—due to its being uphill, downhill, and blind—this section may take some practice to master. Especially if you're driving a high-powered car, manhandling the steering and punching the throttle can spell quick disaster. Slightly brake before the turn and note the braking point on the map—it should be before the 50 m mark, otherwise you'll likely be too late. You can't anticipate the turn, since that will leave you inside for the next turn—if anything, you want to cut in a little later, which would make the downhill more of a straight shot.

Hitting the gas early here may overwhelm your tires, especially when going downhill, causing you to either spin out or slam into the wall. The Driving Line isn't very helpful here for knowing when to accelerate or brake; depending on the car, you may need to stay mostly off the gas for the next turn. Once you're coming down the hill, get ready; the next turn is quickly approaching.

Don't get too leadfooted here, as the final turn does require some slowing down to hit the apex. If you can hit the gas, it'll only be for a brief moment.

Turn 9: Before you have some breathing room there's turn 9. This only requires moderate initial braking and maybe some soft throttle touches as you're clearing the corner (so you won't veer too much to the outside).

From this point, you'll need to stay off the throttle for the turn into the apex.

Turn 10: Quickly following the last turn, this final turn can easily be overshot if you're too eager with accelerating. Hold back on throttle until you've hit the apex, then power out.

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Rome (Reverse)

Tuning Guide: Interestingly, the reverse course is a lot less stressful than the forward, mainly because the problematic blind turn isn't so intimidating if it's on an incline going in the other direction. Therefore, you can tune your shocks and springs to be stiffer. The course is short and lacks extended straights, so gear ratios should be close.

Recommended Car: Fast-accelerating FR or RR cars—although any drivetrain works fine here.

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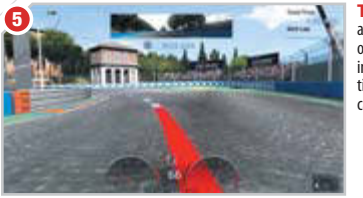
Turn 1: This first bend is actually a double-apex turn, with both taken at similar speeds. You'll be coming in at fairly high speeds, close to 150 mph for high-performance cars, and the braking distance will be long. For a braking marker, you can use the "Rome Circuit" signs overhead for reference—but the braking point will likely come after them for slower cars. From the outside, drop down to second gear, and aggressively cut in. You don't want to clip the curb though, because of its close proximity to the railing. Power out past the first apex to make a wider arc for the next apex. About halfway through the turn, let off the gas to cut into the second apex. Once past the second apex, power out.

Turns 2, 3: Immediately past turn 1, you'll face a right-handed kink. At most, you'll have to take your foot off the gas and turn in. The subsequent left-handed sweeper is one you can power through, though.

Turn 4: You can use a more aggressive line than what the Driving Line here suggests. Brake a little earlier and cut in early; aim to barely clip the curb with your inside tires. Power out just past the apex. It's easy to go wider than necessary on this bend.



Turn 5: After a prolonged straight, you'll encounter a sharp, 110-degree curve. There's no surprises to this one, though. From the outside, slow to second gear, cut in and touch the edge of the inside curb with your inside tire. The road widens significantly after this turn, so you can power out right at the apex.

Turns 6, 7: You'll then come across two sweepers, one curving to the right and another immediately to the left. For the first right-hander, you don't want to ride along the inside because the farther in you go, the more off-camber it becomes. Stay about two car widths from the inside and round the bend. At worst, you'll have to let off the throttle when cutting in, but you shouldn't need to hit the brakes at all.

When the road briefly straights out, you want to be about one car width from the right side, and slow down to third. The left-hander is a mild, decreasing-radius turn, and although you'll stay in third gear throughout, for the second half you'll have to blip the brakes or let off the throttle. Just beyond the sweeper is a mild, right-handed kink—just keep you foot on the accelerator to the finish line.

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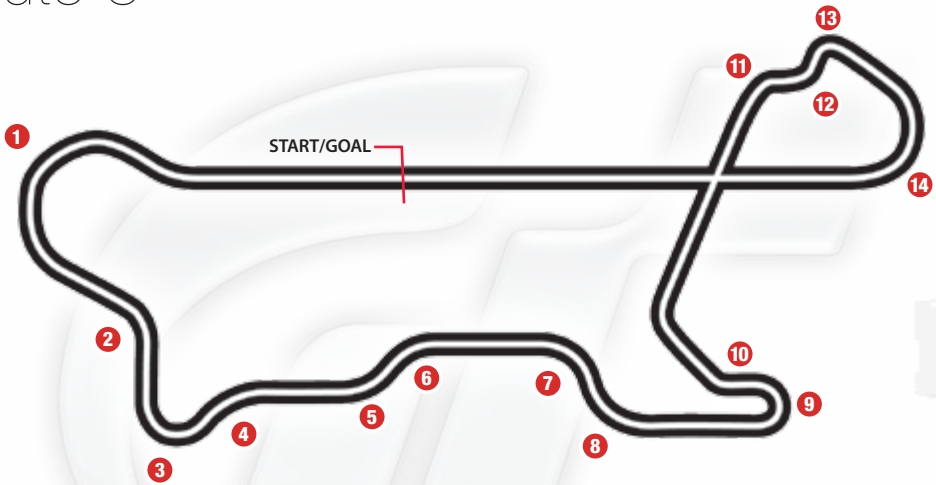
Special Stage Route 5

Tuning Guide: A significant portion of the track is the home straight, and you'll want to maximize your lap times by making the higher gears taller. That said, the rest of the track is full of turns in quick succession, so the majority of the course is taken pretty slow. Since many turns are taken at relatively high speeds, you'll want to dial in some negative camber.

Recommended Car: High-performance FR, RR, MR, or AWD cars.



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Turn 1: Getting this initial turn down is probably the hardest part of the course. You're going at very high speeds at this point and the road not only kinks to the left, but also dives down underground, then turns left in a 180-degree sweeper. The many components of this turn must be executed with precision. The Driving Line unfortunately doesn't help much because it shows that you should brake hard while hitting the right-handed kink, then keeping braking while turning for the sweeper. You'll quickly find that this won't work. There are four things you need to do for this bend.

The first thing is drop down in speed toward the end of the straight for the initial kink. If you're in sixth gear, you'll need to brake down to fifth gear. Then turn in to the right, and turn in early—almost to where you think you'll hit the right wall. Right before entering the tunnel, slam the brakes. While slowing down, don't turn—you have some room before the sweeper starts bending. Right when you downshift to third, let off the gas and start turning in hard to the left. Find the right speed where you can maintain a consistent turn on the inside. You'll be powering out as the tunnel exit comes into view. If you get on the throttle early, you'll be in a bad position for turn 2.

NOTE: The guide for this track is specifically written for faster cars with a six-speed transmission. If you're driving a slower five-speed, then the appropriate gear will usually be one gear lower—that said, when we recommend second gear for a turn it will still be second gear for a five-speed gearbox. Don't downshift to first gear at all in this course.

Turn 2: Immediately after turn 1 is this moderate right-hander, which requires minimum braking. Blip the brakes before turning in and power out at the very end of the bend. Since you want to be on the right side for the next turn, you don't want to power out and drift to the left.

Turns 3, 4: Without much time to position yourself, you'll be cutting into turn 3. This is a fairly tight left-handed sweeper, and you will need to drop down to second gear. When cutting in, though, do so from the mid-RPM range at third and let off the gas pedal. As you're turning in, your speed will naturally drop into the second-gear range. Since a right-hander follows, don't hit the gas until you've pretty much cleared at least three-fourths of the turn. The right-hander itself is very shallow, and you can keep your foot on the gas the entire time.

Turns 5, 6: Some of the more enjoyable turns are these two that make a chicane. They're both high-speed, and at most you'll just need to take your foot off the gas briefly before cutting in.

Turns 7, 8: This area is similar to turns 5 and 6, except it also goes downhill and the space between the bends is longer. You'll need to drop down a gear to take this, but don't brake too much. After the initial turn-in, it's a surprisingly quick set of turns and you can keep you foot on the gas nearly the entire time.

Turn 9: This grueling hairpin comes quickly after the last set of bends, so you'll need to be ready. It's very slow, forcing you to drop in the neighborhood of 40 mph. For some reason, the road gets very wide past the halfway point, but you don't want to use any of that extra real estate; keep the turn tightly wrapped around the inside. This one is followed by a right-handed kink where you can power through.

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Turn 10: Turn 10 is a quick right that can be taken too slow if you're following the braking suggestion on the Driving Line. From the outside, blip the brakes, then cut in toward the apex. The moment your nose is pointed at the right direction, power out, even before clipping the apex. The road out of the exit expands to four lanes, so you have lots of space to go wide.

Turns 11–13 : You'll be going underground briefly and when you climb back up, you'll encounter a blind left-hander. Although you'll be taking it in third gear, you don't want to carry too much speed here. For one, you won't be able to clip the apex. But more importantly, it'll make the subsequent right- and left-handed turns much harder to execute. The apex for the first left is just atop the crest.

From there, cut into the left, modulating the throttle so you can stay on the Driving Line. Once you hit the apex for the left, quickly brake while going straight, dropping down to second gear. Snap back to the right again to go up a ramp toward the final sweeper.

Turn 14: This final sweeper is vital for maximizing your speed on the home straight. You'll start from the outside, drop down to third gear, and move toward the inside. The apex is two-thirds of the way through the corner, and at that point you should mash the gas pedal. If it's timed perfectly, you'll drift to the outside, just barely missing the wall on your left. This gives you the best exit speed, enabling you to barrel ahead full-speed into the finish line.

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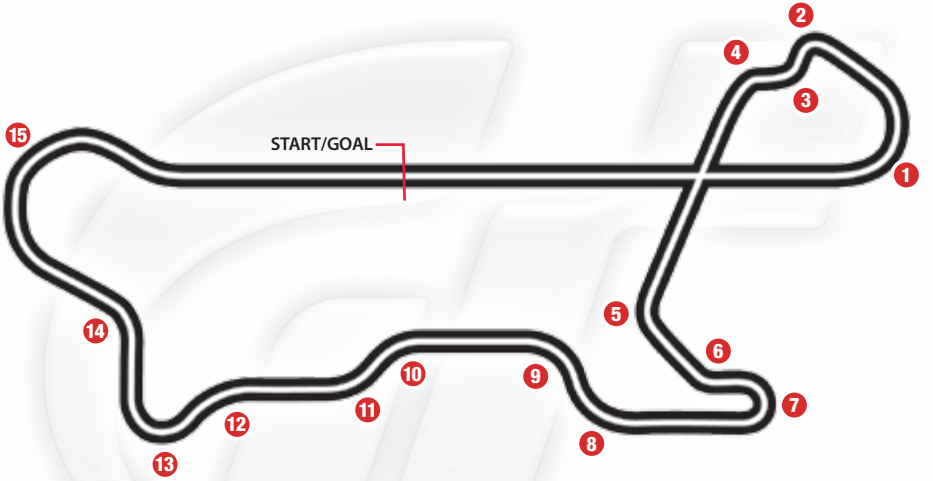
Special Stage Route 5 (Reverse)

Tuning Guide: Compared to Clubman Stage Route 5, Special Stage Route 5 adds a couple more turns, but doesn't dramatically change how you'd tune your car. You might want to use more negative camber since there are many more tight turns in succession, but know that it'll slightly hurt your speed into the home straight.

Recommended Car: Fast-accelerating FR.



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Turn 1: If you're coming into the first bend from a running start or from a previous lap, you'll be carrying a lot of speed here. From the outside lane step hard on the brakes, then downshift to third. As you're turning in let off the gas and stay along the inside, going around 55 mph. The sweeper eventually flattens out from the decline, and you'll find it's easier to understeer, especially if you step on the throttle early. Power out about three-fourths of the way through, or even later. This will bring you to the right side of the road, setting you up for the next turn.

Turns 2–4 : Straight ahead you'll see the back side of an overhead sign, and you'll use your distance to that as your braking marker. Slow down until you get to second gear, then turn in. There are three turns in quick succession here, and you won't need to hit the brakes at all for the two turns that follow. When clipping the first apex, avoid going deep over the curb—if you do it'll upset the car's balance and make it less responsive for the next turn. Instead, clip the curb's edge, and while your foot is off the throttle, turn to the right for the next bend.

You'll use very little gas for the first two bends because it's very easy to drift too wide. Once you are past the second bend, hit the gas and keep your foot planted on the accelerator through the third bend. You'll hit a small straight where the road briefly goes underground.

Turn 3: As you climb up from the brief underground tunnel and reach the crest, you'll soon encounter a moderate left-hander. Get as close as you can to the striped curb on the inside without hitting it, and power out as you cross the apex. Another left-hander with a similar bend is just ahead, so you can't power out for long.

Turn 4: Since you've barely came out of the last bend, this one will need you to let off the throttle into the apex at most. Your speed here will be moderate, around 80 mph. Once you're past the apex, a tight hairpin is just beyond, and you'll need to get ready and slow down.

Turn 5: The tightest turn in the course, this right-handed hairpin makes you drop way down in speed. You should be in third gear from the last bend, and here you'll slow to and stay at second gear. Cut in and ride as close as you can to the inside curb without touching it. The curb is at an off-camber angle, making it a poor candidate for clipping. Your speed here will most likely be under 40 mph. Hold off on powering out until you're at least two-thirds out; although there's plenty of runoff space here, taking a wider turn will slow you down.

Turns 6, 7: The bank on this right-hander allows you to carry a surprising amount of speed through the turn. You've had very little time to accelerate out of the last corner, so you'll only need to let off the throttle before turning in. Hit the gas as you approach the apex, but quickly blip the brakes to take the subsequent left-hander. As you're climbing up the hill and turning left, keep off the throttle because your tendency here will be to understeer.

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Turn 8: From here the track converges with the Clubman Stage Route 5 course. The left-hander here is pretty mild, but it's quickly followed by a right. When turning in from the outside, take your foot off the gas and make the bend—at the most, blip the throttle before making the turn.

Turn 9: The previous left is quickly followed by a right. Ideally you'll be toward the center of the lane. Again, you won't need to slow down much, at the most quickly hitting the brakes before turning into the bend. Hit the gas as you cross the apex (which is in the middle of the corner), but start veering to the right side of the road to set up for the next turn.

Turn 10: Although the first bend here is in the same angle as turns 8 and 9, it abruptly transitions into a tight, right-hander sweeper. You can't carry the same speeds as you did for the previous turn. Slow down to third gear, riding along the inside of the turn. Then, as you reach the apex, turn to the left, pointing your car toward the entry of the left-handed sweeper.

Turn 11: This tight, right-handed sweeper is the most difficult bend in the course since it immediately follows a left. Find a window of opportunity to hit the brakes and drop down to second gear, most likely in the middle of the apex of turn 10. Once you're able to slow down, the sweeper becomes very standard. Ride along the inside, then hit the gas two-thirds of the way out. Start moving toward the center to set up for the next turn.

Turn 12: You'll finally have a chance to breathe here with this lone left-hander. Since you've just exited the slow sweeper, you'll need to only blip the brakes before turning into the inside. Hit the throttle right before you hit the apex, and shift toward the center lane for the final turn.

Turn 13: Going in this reverse direction, this sweeper is much easier to manage. The only thing you'll need to watch out for is that the road starts curving right at the start of the tunnel. Since this is a constant-radius sweeper, find the perfect speed where you can ride along the inside—it'll be around 80 to 90 mph for most cars. Start powering out about two-thirds of the way through the corner and you'll have the ideal exit speed to take on the home straight.

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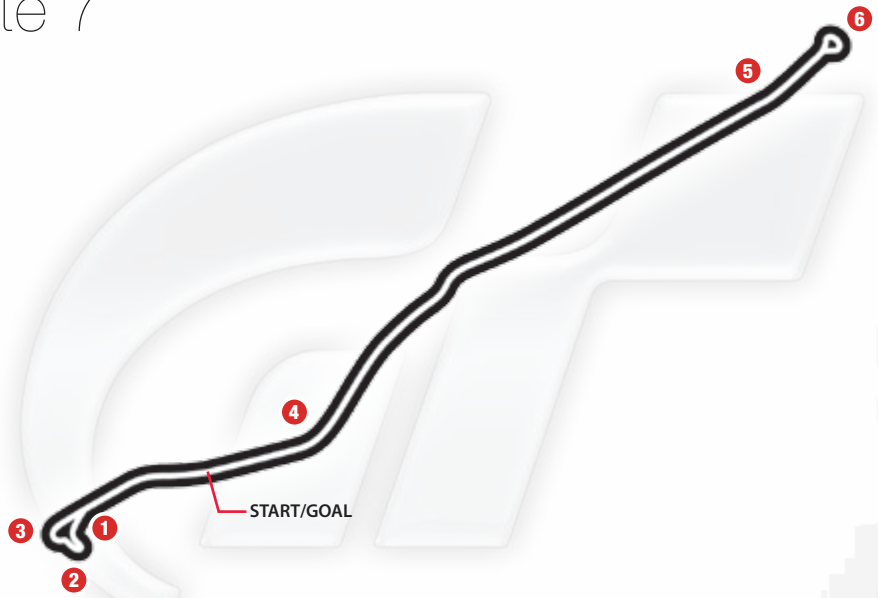
Special Stage Route 7

Tuning Guide: Horsepower and downforce are the name of the game here. Since the overwhelming majority of the track is straight, slap on all the power upgrades that you can and optimize gear ratios so that you get the best top speed. Because there are some high-speed bends in the mix, you'll want to use lots of downforce to ensure that your car stays planted on the ground.

Recommended Car: AWD or FR with gobs of horsepower



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Turn 1: This stage dwarves all other tracks in terms of the need for top-end speed—it makes even the Mulsanne straight on Circuit de la Sarthe seem puny by comparison. The challenge here is that you're carrying such stratospheric speeds that you won't see the turns quickly enough to react. Therefore, you'll either rely on the Driving Line, or memorize key points of the course. At least 15 seconds after the start of the course, you'll have to climb an off-ramp that has you drop down to fourth gear, around 100 mph—sure, that sounds fast, but it's a snail's pace compared to the 200+ mph speeds you'll be piling on.

Turn 2: After climbing up the ramp, immediately slam the brakes, dropping your speed down to 20 mph. Since the corner is small, you'll want as tight a radius as possible. The sooner you turn past the corner, the quicker you can get on the gas.

TIP: Although the Driving Line doesn't show what's very far ahead, you can see the roadside lights from quite a distance. Here the Driving Line shows only a straight path, but the overhead lights show a right-handed bend far ahead.

Turn 3: Soon after, you'll run into a winding, descending on-ramp. Slow down before you start the turn, dropping down to second gear. The ramp is narrow, and your speed will be in the ballpark of 60 mph. Power out just before you clear the bend to maximize your exit speed. For the next minute, the road will be uneventful, with some gentle turns.

TIP: Keep your eyes well ahead of the road. At 200 mph, things can really sneak up on you.

Turn 4: You should be at or near your car's maximum speed when you hit this "slight" bend. And at high speeds, even mild bends seem frightfully tight. The turn will come at you with no warning (even with the Driving Line), and you'll want to use other landmarks for reference. The lights overhead are ideal for this, and as soon as you see the streetlights bending more sharply to the right, blip the brakes and cut toward the right while leaving your foot off the pedal. Once you've cleared the bend you can hit the gas again. The path goes through a long, straight tunnel before bending again.

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Braking Point: Far in the horizon, you'll start seeing orange-colored lights down the middle, with stadium-like floodlights on the sides. That's your cue that the brake point is ahead for turn 5.

Turn 5: This moderate left-handed bend is a nightmare because once again you'll have little warning that a turn is approaching. Use the overhead lights as your guide and hit the brakes until you've reached third gear, then turn in. If you're finding yourself trying to hit the brakes and turn hard, you've started braking too late.

Turn 6: Once you get past that left-hander, you'll quickly hit the brakes for the upcoming 180-degree turn. Drop down to second gear, and ride around the inside in an arc, doing about 60 mph. Power out about three-fourths of the way through the bend. The rest of the course is pretty much straight, but the course is long—over 5 minutes.

TIP: Avoid overtaking an opponent before a turn that needs braking—at these speeds, you can't afford the risk.

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Suzuka Circuit East

Tuning Guide: Since the East track is a lot shorter than the full and doesn't have long straightaways, you can use closer gearing. Also, all the turns are mid- to low-speed, so choose a car (or tune your current ride) with a setup that tends to be neutral at speeds of 60 to 70 mph. Because chicanes make up most of the course, you'll want a car with a crisp and responsive turn-in. Rear-engine, rear-wheel drive cars tend to understeer at the onset and rotate afterward, making them harder to use especially tracks as these. If turn-in is numb, put some toe-in at the front tires. Or, stiffen the front sway bar (which encourages understeer mid-corner as a side effect),

Recommended Car: Any agile FF, FR, or MR vehicle.

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Turn 1: Although the first turn past the home straight looks like a hairpin, it's a decreasing radius turn that has a deceptively easy initial bend and a tightening curve that can quickly send you into the sand pits. The first part can be taken in third gear and is relatively mild, but mid-corner the curve suddenly sharpens, forcing you to drop down a gear.

Once you round the middle, the track starts going uphill, which may promote understeer. At the tight bend, cut the apex where you see the striped curb on the inside, and power out.

Turns 2–6: These chicanes are mostly at the same speed, and are a test of the driver's consistency and coordination with the throttle. Due to the incline, you won't need to brake as much as the game suggests with the flashing gear indicator. Letting off the gas, you'll find your speed quickly bleeding away, especially when driving a lower-horsepower car. In general, you'll stay in second or third gear here. Find the sweet spot for speed (usually around 60 to 75 mph), and stay in that ballpark. Around the apex of each bend, clip the curb, then power out to drift to the outside. As the next bend approaches, let off the gas (or brake, depending on how powerful your car is), clip the next apex, and so on.

The fourth bend in the set of S-turns (the biggest sweeper) is also the slowest, and you'll need to watch your speed so that you don't drift to the outside. You might be able to mash the throttle all the way through some of the turns, but if you find yourself on the inside of the next bend because of that, you're coming in too hot. Force yourself to slow down a lot more for the next turn. If traffic is also cutting the apex, don't be afraid to go even more in the inside, into the grass. Although your car is more unstable in this state, if your car is brushing against another, your vehicle can't fishtail away. And you're doing it all at the others' expense.

Turn 7: Instead of going straight to the full circuit, the track cuts to the right here. The turn does require some moderate braking, or else you'll dig into the sandy runoff area and kill your lap time. The second half of the turn is gentler, so power out toward the home stretch.

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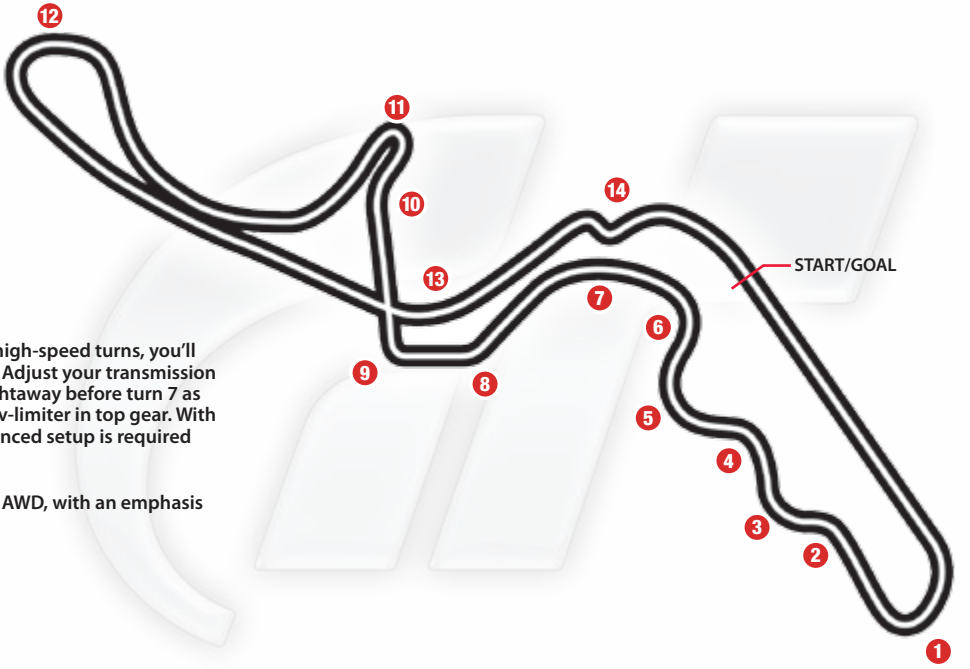
Suzuka Circuit



Tuning Guide: With the extended straight and high-speed turns, you'll want for high-speed stability and performance. Adjust your transmission gearing so that you can accelerate on the straightaway before turn 7 as fast as you can, but without bouncing off the rev-limiter in top gear. With the variety of corners and straights, a fairly balanced setup is required here.

Recommended Car: High-performance RWD or AWD, with an emphasis on speed.

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The last bend in the chicane.

Turns 1–6: Since the first half of the track is identical to the East course, refer to the East course for more details. The first turn is a decreasing-radius turn that will have you drop down to fourth gear, then third mid-corner. Up the slope on the latter half of turn 1 your car will tend to understeer.

For the chicanes, you'll chiefly be in second gear, coordinating the actions of cutting in, letting off the gas, and powering out. The fourth bend (turn 5) is the tightest, forcing you to slow down to second gear.

Turn 7: Where the East course and the full course split, you'll find a long left-handed sweeper. It's a decreasing-radius turn, so the initial turn-in will be the tightest. Slow down to third gear, maintaining the inside with careful throttle modulation. With the initial incline, your car will want to push (understeer). In addition, toward the latter half of the bend the turn becomes off-camber, making it more difficult to maintain the inside. Stay inside even as the bend straightens out for the upcoming corner.

The closer you can clip the apex, the better.

Turn 8: Following a little straight, this right-hander can be taken deceptively quickly. You won't need to drop down much, maybe to third gear. The edge of the corner has a curb that you can easily ride over, so cut across and get on the gas quickly. Since there's runoff space, even if you run a little wide you'll be fine—and in position for the next turn.

Turn 9: Although this turn looks similar to the last, it's actually a fair amount slower, making you prone to going way off the track. The strategy is pretty much the same, though—brake and cut across, and take advantage of the runoff space. The curb provides a lot of room to cut, so clip it aggressively for a faster exit speed.

Set your braking point relative to your proximity to the kink.

Turns 10, 11: Following the last turn, you'll come across a right-handed kink, soon followed by a very tight hairpin. For the kink you won't need to let off the throttle, but be mindful that the braking point for the hairpin is immediately after or at the kink, so be ready to hit the brakes—and hit them hard. Slow down to a mid- to low second gear, then round the corner tightly, going around the inside. Avoid riding on the inside curb, though, and as you're clearing the corner hit the gas.

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Turn 12: After a series of minor turns that you can mostly power through, you'll hit this tricky, decreasing-radius turn. Although at first glance it looks almost like a single hairpin, in reality it's two. For the first bend, you'll brake fairly hard, most likely dropping down two gears. Hit the first apex, powering out toward the outside to set up for the second turn. You cannot accelerate much here, though, because the second turn is a tighter radius and will require you to slow down even more. If you think of the bend as a constant-radius curve, you're guaranteed to fall outside of the track. Another tricky facet of this turn is that the second half is on a slight decline, which shifts the weight forward. The rear wheels tend to get loose very easily, especially on a RWD car. Smooth throttle modulation is required to prevent your tires from getting overloaded. As you're getting past the bend, gradually power out while returning the wheel.

Cut in early, anticipating the Driving Line rather than reacting to it.

Turn 13: It may not look like it, but this turn can be taken at tire-scorching speeds. At the very most, you'll need to drop down a gear, if even that. On cars with slower acceleration, all you might need to do is let off the throttle. Regardless, you'll want to cut into the turn early, anticipating the apex. Because of the high speed, it's easy to turn too late. You have some runoff space here, so hit the throttle right as you clear the apex.

Turn 14: This last chicane is quite nasty—but can be cheated quite a bit. The initial bend can be all but skipped if you cut right into the grass, changing the shape of the curve from an S to a mild V. Be careful when doing this with high-powered cars that aren't AWD, though; you can quickly lose traction—and if you're carrying too much speed, you won't have much time or stability to adjust. The final bend past the chicane can mostly be powered through since you're now at a much lower speed (around second gear). Since the second bend on the chicane is sharp, this still has to be taken slowly, around 40 mph—any faster and you'll overshoot the turn.

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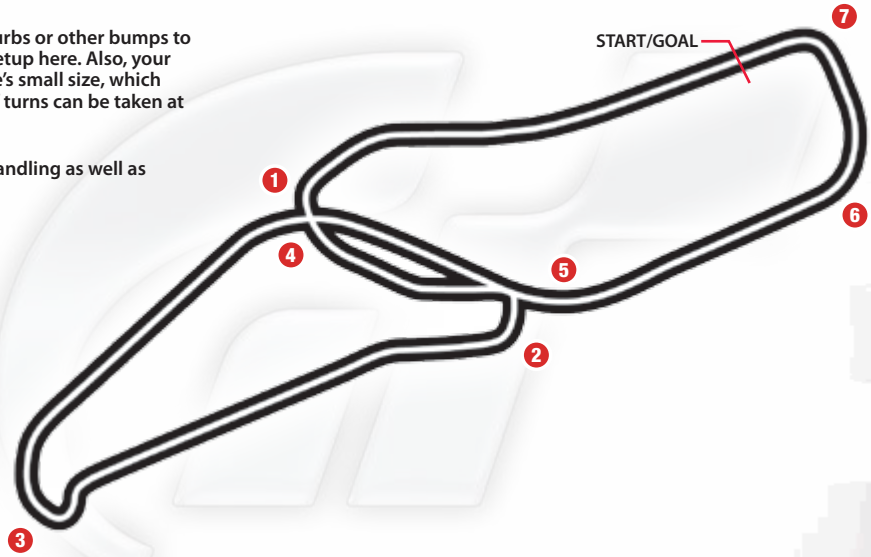
Top Gear Test Track

Tuning Guide: Since the course is flat, and without any curbs or other bumps to disrupt your suspension, you can use a stiff suspension setup here. Also, your car will never pick up a lot of speed because of the course's small size, which means you'll want gearing to be semi-close. Since a lot of turns can be taken at higher speeds, downforce will be helpful here as well.

Recommended Car: Cars with a mix of high/low-speed handling as well as acceleration. Mid-engine sports cars tend to excel here.

This is a situation where you'll turn in a bit first, then brake hard.

Turn 1: Past the starting line, the track slightly veers right and then left. There's a small straight before the hard left, and you'll want to take that opportunity to do your braking there. Brake too late and you'll find yourself wanting to brake while turning—which won't end well. Be sure not to carry too much speed into this corner; gradually brake if you have to make minor steering adjustments so you don't disrupt the stability of the car. After slowing down enough, turn hard into the corner. You might not be able to power through the whole corner, and in that case you'll want to let off the gas or apply a little braking halfway through the turn.



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Turn 2: The road slightly kinks to the left before the right-hand hook, and in spite of the Driving Line suggestion to brake, you may not need to. Although it's technically cheating, there's a lot of corner-cutting you can do here. When you make the 180-degree right turn though, you'll definitely need to drop your speed to bring your car around the tight loop. Once you start seeing the cones up ahead, you can power out.

Turn 3: Yet another left hook. For this one you'll need to start braking ahead from the straightaway, dropping enough speed so that you can again make a tight loop around this turn. One you start seeing the little piles of tires to your left, you can accelerate hard.

Turn 4: You can usually get away with just keeping your foot on the throttle through this high-speed turn, which is nicknamed the "Follow-Through." With the wide runway, you have lots of room to overshoot the turn. This is the fastest turn of the course.

Turn 5: A quick left-hander, this turn calls for a touch of braking at the most. Either way, you will have to let off the gas pedal briefly in the middle of the turn. Throttle out quickly, even before hitting the apex on this high-speed turn.

Turn 6: Turn 6 is one of the more technical turns of the course, in part because you've picked up a lot of speed at this point. Be sure to brake plenty before starting the turn, and you may need to brake again toward the end of the turn, since it's almost two turns. The second turn doesn't allow you to carry much speed, especially because the road narrows from a wide runway to a two-lane road. It's easy to run off the road here, so be mindful that you don't overshoot it.

Turn 7: Just round the corner and Jeremy Clarkson might be there to crown you as the Test Track champ, but don't lose focus—the last challenge is a tight, 90-degree turn that doesn't allow much room for error, due to the narrow road. Don't get overzealous on the gas pedal, and when powering out be sure you don't apply too much throttle—you may find yourself eating grass if you do.

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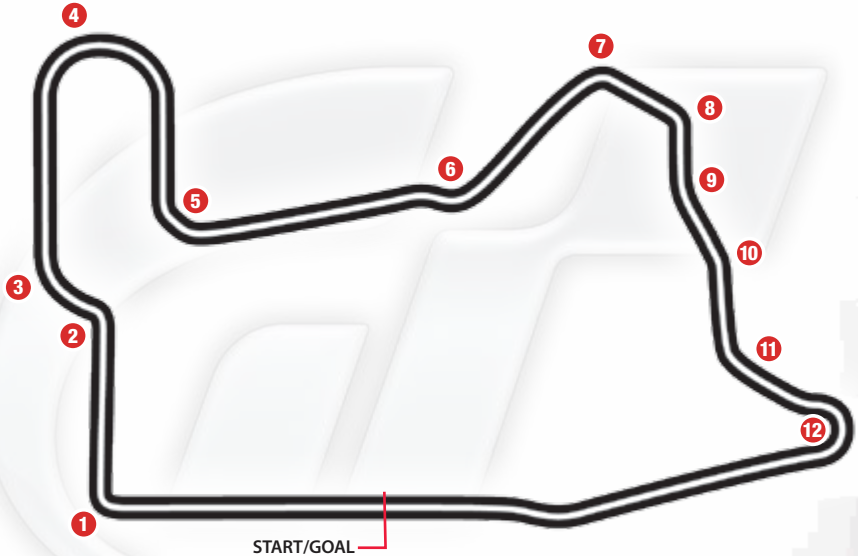
Tokyo Route 246

Tuning Guide: Aside from the straight at the beginning of the course, there isn't much room to accelerate to full speed, so medium gearing ratios are sufficient. The track does have minor dips and climbs, so a very stiff setup could quickly upset your car balance. Some RWD and exotics have a tendency to oversteer in the long sweeping turns out of the factory, so you may need to stiffen the front sway bar or soften the rear sway to compensate.

Recommended Car: High-powered AWD cars with high-speed stability and precise controls.



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Turn 1: This first turn comes after an extended straight from the start of the track. Give yourself plenty of room to slow down, or else you'll plunge headfirst into the busy streets of downtown Tokyo. The braking point will mostly likely be after the 200 m mark. It's a hard 90-degree turn, so start accelerating only after clearing the apex.

TIP: Don't be afraid of running over the curb on the inside of the turn. The more aggressive you are in clipping the apex, the quicker you can accelerate out.

Turn 2: This fairly moderate left turn does take some braking. Turn in early to hit the apex, and again, clip the curb. Don't physically go on the sidewalk—the elevation difference and angle will throw off the car's balance.

In the right-center you can spot five road signs. Hit the power too soon and you'll do a face-plant into them.

Turn 3: This comes immediately after turn 2. You might have to let off accelerator momentarily for the right-hander, but you can power out of the turn for the most part.

Your ears can be a valuable driving tool. One of the ways you can tell what your car is doing in the twists and turns is hearing the sound the tires are making on tarmac. A mild or moderate howl is telling you the car is in a sweet spot—at its limit of traction. When the sound changes to a loud screech, then you know you're past the limit of what the tires can handle—not a safe situation.

It's easy to trail to the outside here. You want to stay as far inside as possible without hitting the curb to your right.

Turn 4: This is a long sweeping 180-degree turn that takes some finesse to consistently navigate through. Brake initially—and also take note that the recommended gear (the flashing number) might be off. Sometimes the game may suggest that you should be in fifth gear, whereas the optimum might be high RPM in fourth. Maintain speed by modulating accelerator. Since the turn is a constant radius, your throttle application should also be fairly consistent. Mash the pedal and you'll find yourself trailing off to the outside or spinning the tires. Stay on the inside of the road, but don't ride on the curb or hit it—you'll lose lots of speed if you're riding the curb.

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Turn 5: This section is deceptive—it looks like one moderate turn, but actually has two small apexes. Brake for the initial turn-in. You'll have a quick second to accelerate, but let go of the gas when you're going through the second turn, or else you lose the inside. In the second screenshot, the second apex is right in front of the Corvette.

Yes, you really want to be this close to the outside wall. You'll have more room and speed to cut to the left.

Turn 6: This is an easy-to-mess-up, hook-shaped turn. You need very little braking in this turn, and it's surprisingly pretty quick around the bend. The key is finding the ideal line. Before entering the turn, stay on the road's left side, then cut to the right with the right-handed kink. Clip the curb on the right side before quickly cutting back to the left. You shouldn't be braking much, if at all in this turn; at the most just let off the gas for the left-hander (and only if you're about to slam into the right wall).

This screen gives you an idea of how aggressive you can clip the apex without hitting the inside railing.

Turns 7, 8: Both turns are similar in speed. Since the first is atop a small hill, the braking point comes sooner than you'd expect. The following turn requires very little braking or letting off the pedal if you anticipate the turn right.

Turns 9, 10: These are two gentle turns that require no braking. That said, there's no runoff space, so you need to get the timing of the turns right. Anticipate the turns and turn beforehand, giving the car time to adjust.

Turn 11: Turn 11 is the ninja turn of the course. The Driving Line may suggest that the turn doesn't need much braking, but it really does—especially with no runoff space. As soon as the previous turn straightens out, as depicted in this screenshot, start braking, then turn right before the road starts turning. Since it's a tight space, you can't anticipate the turn much, or you'll bang into the inside railing.

Turn 12: This tight turn feels like a double-apex. The initial turn-in requires you to slow down a lot. You can hit the gas midway into the corner, but be prepared to let off as you round the last bend. If you're driving on the outside throughout, you're going too fast.

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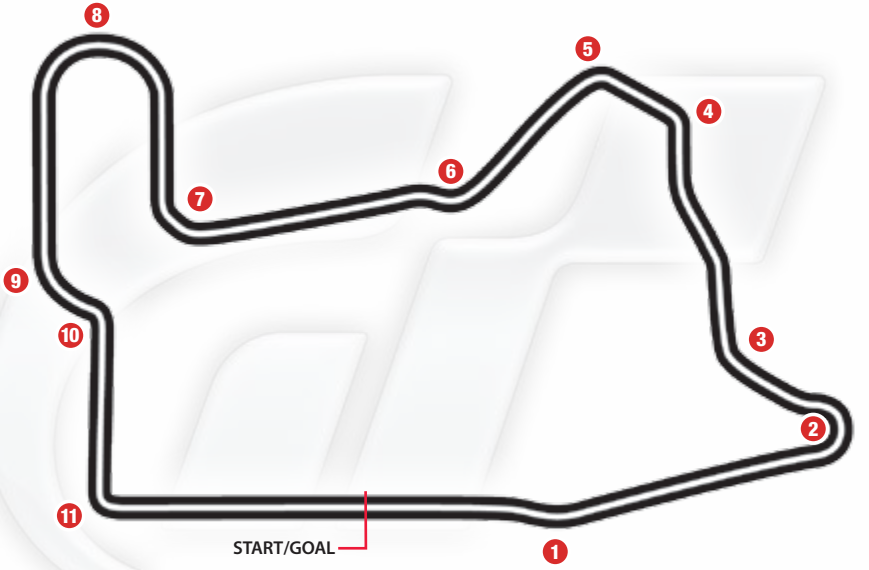
Tokyo R246 (Reverse)

Tuning Guide: The forward and reverse courses don't differ too much, consequently you can use the forward course tune as-is. Have gearing ratios set to about medium—not too close, not too tall. You can clip quite a few apexes on this track, so avoid ultra-stiff suspension setups.

Recommended Car: Responsive and agile MR, FR, or RR.



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Turn 1: This left-handed kink isn't much, but if you're not alert you can still slam into the outside wall. When you start seeing the yellow, striped railing on your left, start turning into it to anticipate the kink. The road goes slightly uphill at the bend, so the corner is blind. Aim to hit the inside rail right at the crest, and you'll be able to power through without letting off the gas pedal.

Turn 2: The second turn will have you braking more than any other turn because it comes out of the only long straight. Like the forward course, you'll use the overhead signs on your right for reference. The braking point for most cars is beyond the 200 marker, but the Driving Line's suggestion here is also quite reliable. Avoid hugging the inside of the curb because this turn is shaped almost as two 90-degree bends. If you're riding along the inside at the midpoint, you'll have to make a sharp turn out of the corner, which will hurt your exit speed.

Turn 3: In contrast to the forward course, this blind right-hander is much easier in reverse. As you turn in, the road sweeps up an incline, which will naturally slow you down. And given that you haven't had much time to power out of the previous corner, you can simply let off the gas, then turn in. Don't be too quick on the gas on exiting, though, because the road here is narrow and there's no runoff space. Hit the throttle late out of the apex. Following this turn are two slight kinks, the first to the left and the second to the right—neither requires any slowing down, so keep your foot mashed on the accelerator.

Turn 4: The road is extremely wide here and there are about five lanes of tarmac to use. Therefore, you can take the next left-hander very quickly. Brake and downshift to third, then cut into the apex. Clip the striped curb and power out—even before the apex. Since you'll have so much space to work with, and since the next turn is also a left-hander, going wide out of the corner is a good thing.

Turn 5: After the spacious, freeway-like lanes in the last bend, turn 5 can be a startling surprise. The exit is still relatively wide at four lanes, but you'll have to come in slower nonetheless, somewhere around 75 mph. With the narrowing road, you'll want to avoid slowing down after the apex because that will hurt your exit speed. Instead, have a slower entry speed, then quickly power out of the apex and keep your foot on the gas pedal.

Turn 6: This double-bend is fortunately a lot easier on the reflexes than in the forward version. From the outside, lift off the gas and cut into the right, moving diagonally across the road. Aim for the yellow railing on the right, as though you want to slam into it. The turn doesn't need any braking; it is all about how and when you hit the gas. Apply the throttle right before you clip the apex, which will make you understeer due to the incline. As you're nearing the striped curb on your left for the left-hander, quickly cut in. There's about three lanes worth of space, but you should be able to keep your foot on the gas out of the apex.

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Turn 7: After a small straight, you'll come to a 90-degree sweeper. The braking point and the timing of the turn-in is everything here. Use the overhead yellow signs for your braking point reference. Since you haven't had much time to accelerate, it should be just beyond the 100 marker. Hit the brakes, dropping down to fourth gear. Cut into the turn, letting drag naturally drop your speed down to third. Power out about two-thirds of the way out of the bend, but start moving back to the right for the next turn.

Turn 8: It's easy to crash into the outer wall for this 180-degree sweeper; beginners tend to underestimate just how long it really is. From the outside, cut in and maintain consistent line on the inside. For high-end cars, maintain a speed of about 90 mph. You'll see a series of signs that appears on your left, which you can use as a reference point for powering out of the exit. Hit the accelerator as the last sign passes by on your left to power out without going too wide.

Turn 9: This left-hander by itself isn't too difficult, but it's complicated by the sharper right-hander that immediately follows. The entry follows the conventional formula for a turn. Moderately brake from the outside, then cut in, clipping the inside curb. This bend is surprisingly fast; take it in fourth gear and in the high 90s. That said, you don't want to hit the gas out of the apex because you must prepare for the left-hander. It's essential that you not only get close to the apex, but also stay on the inside for this turn. Otherwise, you'll be in a poor position for the next turn.

Turn 10: One of the more dicey turns due to its close proximity with turn 9, number 10 will have you blip the brakes and turn in with your foot off the pedal. How much work you put into getting through this corner depends on how good your racing line is from the last corner. If you're coming in from the left side of the road, you can turn in, clip the apex, and power out without much hassle. The road here is wide once again, giving you plenty of room to power out and go wide. Once out of the corner, start moving to the right for the final turn.

Turn 11: This right-hander is simple enough—you just need to find the best braking point to turn in. From the outside, hit the brakes—typically past the 100 marker sign overhead—and take the turn in second gear. Since the curb at the apex is flat, you can clip it aggressively, but don't go in with all four wheels over the curb or else it'll hurt the acceleration coming out of the corner. Hit the gas once you cross the apex, and power out of the corner to the finish line.

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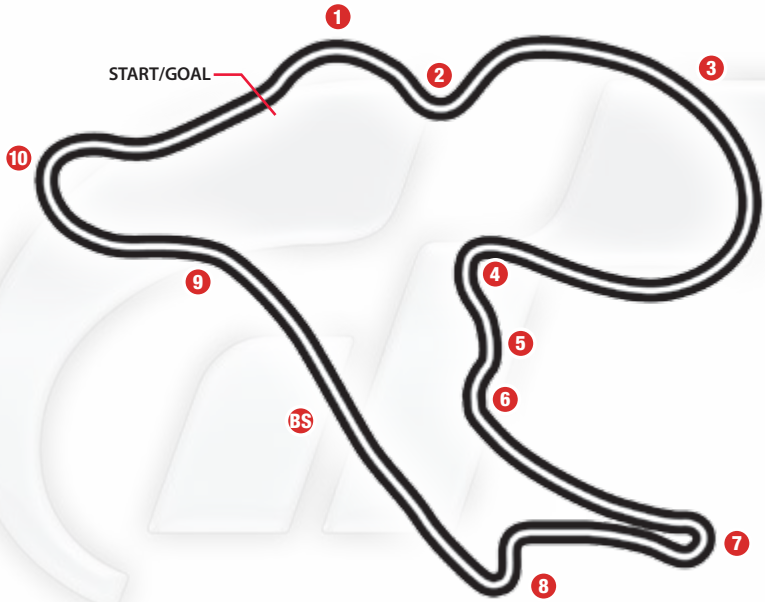
Toscana

Tuning Guide: If you're not using a dedicated rally car, you'll obviously need dirt tires for this track. Although it is technically possible to do rally races in a drivetrain other than AWD, the lack of traction in FWD or RWD makes AWD the clear winner. Because of the poor traction, you'll want to set the torque distribution to be relatively even. Also, because of the elevation changes and the rough roads, choose a softer suspension settings, but also increase the ride height you so won't quickly bottom out.

Recommended Car: Any rally car or higher-end AWD cars with dirt tires.



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Turn 1: This turn begins just barely beyond the starting line. After the slight left, immediately start braking in preparation for the harder right-hander. If the race just started from a stop (as opposed to a running start), then you won't need much braking here. You'll be starting the turn from about the middle of the road as opposed to the typical outside-in. The apex is at the middle of the turn, and when you reach it, you'll want to stay on the inside of the curve throughout. You can't accelerate out and move toward the outside because turn 2 is immediately approaching, and going too fast out of turn 1 will mean you're in no-man's-land for the next turn.

Turn 2: Since this is a shorter, sharper turn, it's easy to overshoot it and slam into the plastic barrier. Slow your car down considerably to get a nice, tight turn. Also, hold off on going all out until you've cleared most of the turn.

Turn 3: This long, rolling sweeper is one of the faster areas of the course. You'll push on the throttle for the majority of the turn—but watch out because the turning radius gets tighter for the second half. As soon as you reach the bottom of the hill, start braking and drop at least a gear.

When you reach the middle of this point of the turn, apply the brakes a bit—but since you're going uphill, you may not need to hit the brakes as much as the Driving Line suggests. Cruising up the hill without hitting the gas may be all that's needed. Once you clear the top of the hill, the road starts flattening out to a small straightaway, which allows you to build up speed.

Turn 4: Especially since you've built up a decent amount of speed from the previous small straight, you'll have to do a lot of braking on turn 4. If you start braking after the row of trees end, you've most likely hit the brakes too late, and will plant your car into the barrier. Instead, hit the brakes as you approach the end of the line of trees. As you turn in, stay on the inside and don't accelerate out until you've almost cleared the turn.

Turn 5: Immediately after that last tight turn is a brief chicane, which is pretty tame. The main pointer is that you should be hugging the inside of the last turn of the chicane, and to do that you may need to let off the gas pedal. If you're caught on the outside, it'll set you up poorly for the next turn, which is another tight left-hander.

Turn 6: This left-hander deceptively requires some braking, or else you'll find yourself quickly drifting toward the outside. Give yourself some time to brake a bit and be mindful that the apex is very late here; in the screenshot, it's just around the bend, behind the fence. So don't be quick to power out of this turn and take your time.

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Turn 7: Once you've cleared the previous turn, there will be another straight section where you can gain some speed. Watch out though, because the tightest turn of the track is approaching. The braking point will likely be where the fence on the left starts.

You'll want to drop your speed really low here—even below 40 mph. And although the gear indicator at the bottom of the screen will probably be flashing a "1," it's best to disregard that and stay in second gear.

Notice how the braking point on the Driving Line coincides with the start of the left fence on the right side.

Because this is a low-speed, tight turn, don't be afraid of tail sliding a bit on this one. To tail slide, you'll need to apply the throttle a bit to keep the nose pointed deep inside. Since the apex is close to the middle of the turn, you can start powering out as soon as you're starting to exit the corner. There's another small straight section here, allowing you to gain some speed.

Turn 8: This is actually a set of two turns in close succession. The first is a fairly straightforward turn. Just give yourself time to start slowing down. Timing wise, it'll be past the first oak tree on your left. Since another turn follows immediately, you cannot use much throttle here—maybe you can blip it immediately after clearing the bend of the first turn.

Since the second turn is at a sharper angle than the first, go easy on the throttle through the second bend. The apex on the second turn is more than halfway around the turn, so you'll have to resist the urge to punch the throttle early.

Back Straight: This section is mostly straightforward, but it does have some jumps, so watch out. When your car gets airtime, be mindful that you can't change direction in midair. Also, avoid drastic steering inputs before you hit the ground because that can cause you to lose control. There are two minor jumps on this stretch, but since the road doesn't have any major kinks, it should be a breeze so long as you make sure you have a good driving line.

Turn 9: This mild sweeper can sneak up on you, and it might not require as much braking as the Driving Line suggests. Just make sure you're slow enough that you can traverse the bend without banging into the barrier on the right side.

Turn 10: It's very easy to overshoot this turn and go wide because the braking point is later than you would expect. The first screenshot shows the initial braking point, but because the sweeper has a decreasing-radius turn, you'll need to slow down again around the middle of the bend.

Once past the apex, stay on the inside. When you see the slight kink to the left, start straightening out to accelerate toward the finish line.

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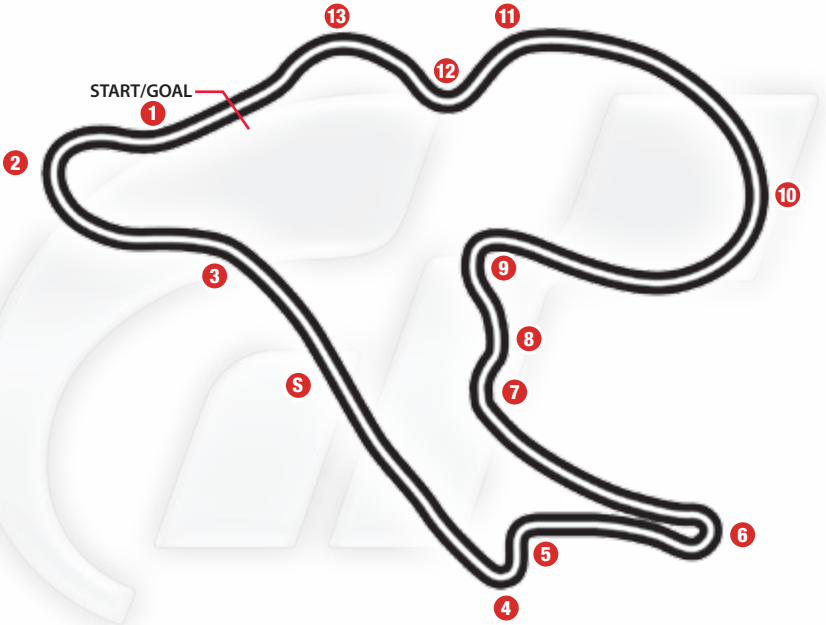
Toscana (Reverse)

Tuning Guide: The reverse track isn't substantially different than the forward, so similar principles apply here. If you're using a regular production AWD car and not a rally car, set the torque distribution to 50/50, sending power equally to the front and rear wheels. The roads are rough, so you'll need tall ride heights and a softly-sprung suspension.

Recommended Car: Rally AWD, or high-powered production AWD with dirt tires.



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Turns 1, 2: Before the initial left-handed kink, slow down to about 60 mph if you're starting the track from a running start. Cut into the apex, getting close to the grass on the outside without crossing over. The road will start sweeping in a circular arc to the left for turn 2. Since turn 2 gradually increases in radius, the initial turn-in will be the tightest. Slow down to second gear, rounding the initial bend at around 40 mph. Start powering out as the road unwinds, but you can't carry too much speed until the straight section.

Turn 3: You'll face a mellow right-handed kink here, which is complicated by a bump in the road that makes it a blind turn. Stay on the inside, even cutting into the grass area beside the track.

The Straight: The highlight of the course, this straight section will have you flying down the road at speeds approaching 100 mph. There are two sizable jumps that you'll need to watch out for. And since cars can't change direction in midair, align you car and keep as straight on the road as possible prior to each jump. Just before lifting off, keep your foot firmly planted on the gas pedal, which will keep your nose up as you come crashing down on the dirt track.

Turns 4, 5: Past the fantastic leap, you'll quickly need to get on the brakes for this slow pair of turns. Decelerate down to second gear and drive along the inside of the first bend at around 40 mph. The second bend is tighter, and your speed should drop into the 30s as you're riding the inside. Get on the gas as you're coming out, but prepare to slow to a crawl for the next turn.

Turn 6: This tight hairpin will have you drop down to speeds in the 30s again. It's on a slight incline, so you'll have a lot of stability into the corner. You can cut across the grass beyond the track as well, making the turn shorter—one of the perks of dirt tracks and dirt tires is that going outside of the track often doesn't change the handling dynamics by much.

Turns 7, 8: You'll be climbing up a hill before encountering a difficult right-hander, which is followed by a mild left. The biggest issue is the right is a blind turn, hidden on the descent back down. Use the giant oak tree on your right as the brake marker. As you soon as you climb over the crest, the tree should come into view. Start moving toward the right side of the lane, then hit the brakes. Turn in and ride along the inside. The road is noticeably off-camber here, making it treacherous to navigate. Immediately past the apex you'll see a left-hander. Cut across diagonally from the right side of the road to the left, which will align yourself for the second bend.

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Turn 9: As a stone house comes into view on your right, you'll face a stiff right-hander. Since it's on an incline, you can brake pretty late and allow the hill to do some of the work for you. Aggressively cut in to the inside to the point where you're even in the grass. Power out into the mini-straight.

Turn 10: This tortuous sweeper is much more difficult with the reverse track than the forward because it's a blind, increasing-radius turn that plunges steeply downward. As you approach the crest, you'll most likely need to slow down to second gear and ride along the inside as you embark on the descent. Once you're past the initial sharp bend, the road eases up, which allows you to gain lots of speed. As you climb back up the hill, start turning in to the left before you reach the crest because the road continues to drift toward the left.

Turn 11: Although the angle of the kink makes it seem slow, you're able to cut across the grass aggressively here, which makes it a relatively fast turn. Blip the brakes initially, and while in third gear cut across, smoothing out the sharp bend of the road. Notice in the screenshot how much you can cut across.

Turns 12, 13: The final two turns are pretty uneventful. As you climb up the hill for the first turn, slow down to second and cut across the grass, making the turn shallower. Your speed here will be low, in the 40s or even the 30s. But by driving through the grass, you can also power out quicker. From the right side, go diagonally across the road and into the final turn. Although there's a slight right-handed kink right before the finish line, you can ignore it and drive over the grass again, making a straight shot to the end. As you can see, this track is a corner cutter's paradise.

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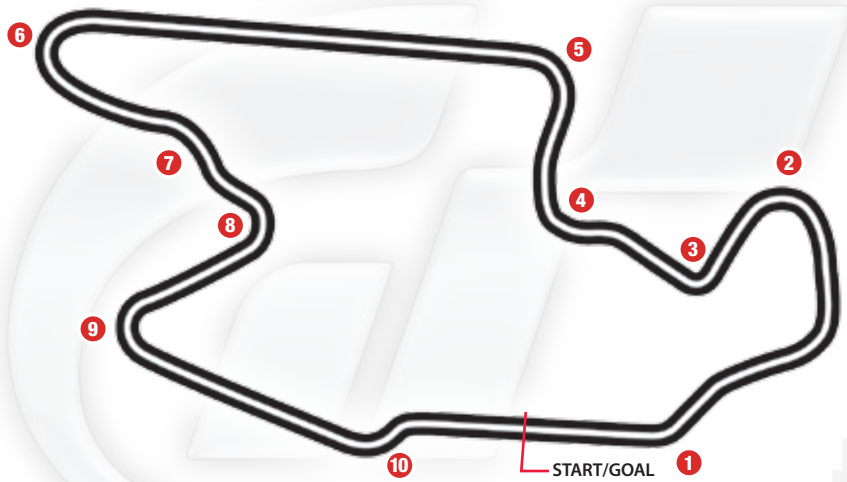
Trial Mountain

Tuning Guide: Since this is pretty curvy course, implementing some negative camber could be a good idea. The rough nature of the track (especially if you're planning to cut across the dirt a lot) means your suspension should be softer than usual, and the ride height raised. Since turns are on both inclines and declines, toe should be relatively neutral, although slight rear toe-out for FWD cars never hurts.

Recommended Car: A balanced, agile car with the ability to turn in quickly; FR, MR, or AWD.



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Turn 1: Immediately following the starting line of the track, there's a minor left-handed kink. The kink itself isn't particularly noteworthy, but it's a valuable passing opportunity if there's a lot of traffic in front of you (there usually is if the race just started). Aggressively cut across it and into the dirt—this could save you time even if there's no traffic.

Turn 2: The braking point for this hard left will be just past the bridge overpass. It's easy to slack off on this turn, or to brake too late. Be sure to do all the braking before you enter the tunnel, otherwise you'll be turning very wide. Since this is a steep uphill climb, your car will have a tendency to understeer. Start to power out around midway through the tunnel.

Turn 3: Because of the large rock outcropping, you won't see how tight this bend is. Brake to second or third gear, and do the bulk of the braking before you start turning in front the outside. Since there's no runoff space on the inside, avoid aggressively clipping the apex (or else you'll clip the rock). Once past the apex in the middle, start powering out immediately.

Turn 4: Following a slight left kink, there is another blind turn, similar to the previous except slightly faster. Don't slack off on that kink. Stay on the left side and kink left so that you're on the outside leading into the right-hander. Again, brake before turning. If you took the last turn in second gear, you might get away with taking this one in third. This turn may be a bit quicker, but it's also longer, thus the apex is just beyond the midpoint. Hug the inside, and power out after hitting the apex.

Turn 5: Another blind turn, this time from inside a tunnel. Start braking before you exit the tunnel—otherwise, you'll be riding along the outside of this sweeper. Drop to around third. Because the curve is slightly banked, you can power out relatively quickly, even a little before the midpoint. As you hit the throttle out, it should naturally put you on the right side of the lane entering the extended tunnel path.

Turn 6: After passing a scenic straightaway of overhanging trees, you reach another sweeper, this time even longer. From the outside lane, brake, then start turning in just as you clear the overhang of trees. Notice the area with the yellow diagonal lines: Although it may seem like a good idea to ride inside it, the rock outcropping abruptly cuts off that area at the end of the bend, putting you suddenly at a collision course with the mountain. Take the suggested Driving Line instead.

Notice how close you can skin the walls without hitting them. With over-the hood view, you get a better sense of the your car's size than with the cockpit view.

Turn 7: This slight chicane requires delicate feathering of the throttle, and careful cutting through the apexes. You can go into the dirt to make the chicane straighter, but don't bang into the walls or your racing line will be completely thrown off. Since the angles are very mild, you can apply a lot of throttle through these bends, letting off only to make corrections around the apex.

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The apex is very late here, but you can power out quickly nonetheless, even before reaching the apex.

Turn 8: Soon after the chicane is another bend that will have you do moderate braking. Be sure you're at the turn's outside at this point, and hit the brakes before doing any turning. Another reason for this is the road is now at a slight decline, and your car will already be prone to oversteering; excessively hitting the brakes and turning will only further encourage your tail to rotate.

Turn 9: There are no brake markers on this course, so you'll have to use whatever is around the course as reference. In this turn, the curb to the right is a convenient marker. Again, brake before entering the turn and stay on the outside before turning in. Power out once you hit the apex, which is slightly after the middle of the bend.

Turn 10: A corner cutter's favorite, this final chicane can be handled two ways: the puritanical way and the (generally accepted) running-over-the-dirt way. The honest approach of keeping within the track will be slightly slower, though, so it's generally preferable to cut across. There are two schools of thought in cutting across. Some prefer to cut across the grass on the left, while others cut across the later right-handed bend that's flush against the mountain. Still others cut across both. How you can tackle this corner depends on the capabilities of your car. Since you're running at high speeds by the time you reach the first bend, you'll be unstable when hitting the grass—especially since the road is still going downhill. And cutting across the right-hander carries more risk because it's sloped—if you carry a lot of speed into the right-hander and touch the sloped mountain base, you'll find your car at an extreme tilt, even riding on your two left wheels.

For very quick cars, you'll most likely need to slow down a bit regardless. If you're more concerned about stability, let off the gas when turning into the grass and turn early. Once on the grass, avoid hitting the gas, which will only cause the tires to slip from under you. Steer the car so that it's straight-on to the course, then power out.

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Trial Mountain (Reverse)

Tuning Guide: Like the forward course, this is full of curves, many of which are on inclines and decline. Since there aren't long stretches of braking or accelerating, dialing in negative camber is a good idea. Depending on the drivetrain and its tendency to oversteer or understeer, you'll want to put more negative camber on the front or rear (more up front for understeer, more to the rear for oversteer). The rough bumps and divots mean you need to use a softer suspension setup.

Recommended Car: Nimble FF, FR, or MR.

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Turn 1: Human racers notoriously plow across the dirt in the forward version of this chicane, and fortunately that doesn't change in reverse. That said, you do have to be more careful when driving through the dirt patch because sitting on an incline your car will be much harder to steer with the understeer and the poor traction. Slow down, or else you'll be pounding into the wall to the side.

Cut in early, barely clipping the first apex. The closer you are to the first apex, the less maneuvering you'll have to do to avoid the impending barriers to the right. At the same time, avoid going too deep into the first apex because the sloped hill will send your right wheels skyward, destroying any semblance of control you have. You'll then plow through the dirt. Start turning hard to the right to minimize or avoid crashing into the left wall. How quickly you can cheat this turn depends on your car's off-road capabilities—it may be quicker just going the legitimate route.

Turn 2: After climbing up to the crest of a hill you'll go back down and face this deceptively sharp right-hander. Brake from the outside lane before turning in, and use the signs hanging on the left side for your brake marker. Cut into the inside going around 60 mph. Again, since this curve lies on an incline, your car will want to understeer. Lightly brake while coursing through the turn if you're going too wide (which is called trail braking). Because of the tendency to push, you may need to hit the throttle later than you'd think.

Turn 3: The road straightens out briefly, and you'll face yet another tight left-hander. Drop down to second, cut into the apex, and quickly start powering out—the exit will feel less tight and you'll be able to power through easily. The trick is all in the entry.

Turn 4: After rounding the last bend, you'll quickly run into a very mild set of chicanes. This requires no braking; at most, let off the throttle a bit, especially at the end. If you're struggling here, chances are you're not taking the correct line. Cut across at each apex to straighten out the curves.

Turn 5: This sweeper is mostly standard, but the bend does get slightly tighter at the end, which means it's easy to go too wide and hit the outside wall. From the outside, brake and turn in, using the outside edges of the diagonal stripes on the ground as reference. Like the forward version, avoid having your car inside those stripes—they're there as a visual reference for the best driving line. Let off the throttle if the tightening bend makes you drift outward excessively. You'll want to drift to the outside edge of the track, but not enough to collide against the sides.

Turn 6: Coming from the longest straight on the course, you'll need a fair amount of space to slow down. The braking point for most cars comes before clearing the tunnel, and there's no visual marker to use as a braking reference. You'll just have to practice and figure out where is the best spot to brake. It's typically a couple of hundred feet before the tunnel exit. Brake hard, then turn in while eventually slowing down to second. Use the accelerator sparingly mid-corner, and don't apply too much coming out—your car will have a tendency to understeer coming out of here, and the subsequent tunnel still has a minor bend.

Turn 7: After clearing the tunnel there's a blind left-hander, so you'll need to be on the right side. Slow down to third, then turn in slightly early. The inside edge of this curve has a rock outcropping that can do serious damage to the car, so don't try driving over the curb. Also, you can't power out quickly here without ramming into the walls on the right side, so think of it as a late apex turn when powering out.

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Turn 8: This next turn is surprisingly one of the harder turns on the course in part because your car will want to understeer so much. Like the last turn, it's blind, but it's also on a hill and is slower. Brake in advance, and turn in slightly early. Because of the tendency to push, it's actually harder to take the turn too deep than shallow. If you're going too wide into the turn, lightly apply the brakes to orient the nose of your car in the right position. Take the turn at around 60 mph. Because of your car's reluctance to turn, be very careful with the throttle—often you won't be able to punch it until after you clear the apex.

Turn 9: You've put up with pesky understeer this whole time, and now finally the terrain starts heading back downhill. After the last turn, immediately shift back to the outside of the lane. From there, start braking before the tunnel begins. There is a small crest in front of the tunnel, so cut in before that to prevent your car from drifting outside. Drop down to second and turn into the inside. Maintain the inside, and start powering out when you start seeing the tunnel's exit. If you're going wide, take your foot off the gas.

Turn 10: Flying downhill, you've picked up some speed so you'll have to apply the brakes a bit here. Hit the brakes (maybe a half second or so), and turn in early to hit the apex. Then immediately power out.

Turn 11: The final turn can be handled with no braking, but it takes positioning and timing. Prior to this turn is a small left-handed kink. Cut across it so that you're on the left side of the road. Then cut back again to the right, letting off the gas briefly to get the right angle. Immediately power out and you're at the home straight. If this is your last lap in a race, don't go to the right to set up for turn 1, you'll save a tiny bit of time just going down the center of the road.

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Tsukuba Circuit

Tuning Guide: Due to the course's short length, tight turns, and the constant-radius, high-speed turns, this is a great place to tune your car's suspension and handling. Although elevation changes are minor, you'll be riding over the curbs on the chicanes, so you can't get too stiff. Also, because the course lacks extended straights, or prolonged braking, you can use a lot more negative camber here than other tracks. When competing, pick lighter, more nimble cars rather than those with brute power.

Recommended Car: Any lightweight, maneuverable car—FF, FR, RR, or AWD.

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Turn 1: The initial right-hander is actually a constant-radius hairpin that requires you to drop down to second gear. Since it's just ahead of the start of the track, at the onset of this turn you'll have plenty of traffic to wade through. Cut into the inside as much as you can and lightly bump others out to the outside. If there are no other cars, stay on the inside of the curve and power out as you start seeing the turn unwind. Don't be caught on the outside of the turn, especially in the middle of the corner—you'll lose a ton of time. Gradually power out while simultaneously gradually letting off the steering.

Turn 2: Immediately following the first turn is a high-speed chicane. With most cars you can just lead-foot it through the little curves until you get close to the 180-degree turn. Cut across the apex of each bend, keeping your line as straight as possible. Since the curbs here are pretty flat, feel free to ride over them aggressively. Watch out for the last bend though because if you're driving a relatively fast car, your braking point will start before the right-hander finishes.

Turn 3: This slow turn will require you to keep off the throttle, and has a relatively late apex. Since you've gained a bit of speed from flooring it through the set of chicanes, you'll need a decent amount of room to brake. Again, the braking point might be before the chicane even finishes, so align your car early on so that you'll start from the outside. Anticipate the last chicane, then brake hard. You should drop down enough in speed so that when you turn in, you'll be close to the inside edge of the track. If you find yourself turning on the outside of the lane, you are coming in too hot. Modulate the throttle so that you're hugging the inside, and as you see the turn unwind start accelerating. Since the track is relatively narrow, you'll run out of space very quickly if you hammer the accelerator too quick, so watch out.

Knowing when to gas out just takes practice, and knowledge of the characteristics of your car. The faster the car accelerates, the easier it is to drift to the outside. As you power out toward the right side, start moving back to the left side of the road immediately for the next turn.

Turn 4: This turn is deceptively fast and because you just accelerated out of the previous turn it requires only momentary braking. The trick is to brake and cut in early, anticipating the turn. It'll feel like a slightly early apex. Due to the slight incline, you won't accelerate as quick on this corner, which allows you to hit the gas a bit earlier and harder. You may be able to hit the gas even before clipping the apex once you have the angle down.

Turn 5: In contrast to the other turns, this is one of easiest and quickest. It shouldn't require any braking or letting off the gas pedal. As long as you have the right driving line down and cut into the curves at the right time, your foot should be on the throttle the entire time. The incline flattening out past the curve may be able to upset your balance, so avoid any erratic changes or a sudden letting off the throttle—maintain a smooth and consistent line.

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Turn 6: As you approach the slight left-hand kink before the hairpin, you'll be mashing the brake for the tightest turn on the course. Like the first turn, this can be a great passing opportunity by late-braking before the turn. On the flip side, there's not much room for error, so you can easily smash into the padded walls if you overshoot the mark. From the outside, cut in aggressively to the inside if somebody is in front of you. Be careful not to carry too much speed through the turn. Nudge the others to the outside, but avoid frontal hits, which can not only damage your car, but greatly slow you down. Damage from the side is usually much less severe, and also won't adversely impact the aerodynamics as much.

Without traffic, similar principles as for the first turn apply. Keep on the inside and modulate the throttle so that the steering is always locked fully to the right. If you're ever letting off the steering, it means you aren't going fast enough into the turn. If your car starts turning too much, gently apply the throttle instead of letting off on the steering. If you're drifting out, let off the gas. Wait until the turn starts to unwind, then power out. While on the inside, find the right timing so that when you power out, your left wheels are skinning the outer curb. If you power out and have plenty of room to your left, you've hit the gas too late. The deeper you end up to the left side of the lane, the more speed you have to capitalize on the straightaway.

Back Straight: Because of all the tight turns and the track's narrow width, this straight is one of the few clear opportunities to pass others. You can't miss out on this chance, and how you exited the last corner will largely determine how successfully you can gain on your opponents. Draft any opponents in front of you, staying directly behind them. Don't go to the side to pass until the very last minute. Squeeze every speed advantage you can by staying behind your opponent as long as possible.

Turn 7: This final turn is taken at relatively high speeds. Trying hovering between 75 and 90 miles power hour, depending on your car. Because of the long back straight, you'll need plenty of braking prior to turning in. Don't brake to your desired speed though, allow some room to decelerate more as you let off brake and coast into the turn. While traversing the corner, stay on the inside, but stay off the curb because it's off-camber. Again, accelerate if you're turning in too deep, let off if you're drifting out. When the end of turn starts to appear, hit the gas. Since the starting area has a pretty large runoff area, you have lots of room and more time to power out here than at other corners. So don't hesitate to ride along the rumble strip aggressively if it gets you a better lap time.

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CHAPTER 05

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Glossary

ABS: Anti-lock brakes. Prevents wheels from locking under braking.

Active Steering: An in-game feature that automatically countersteers the car when it exhibits oversteer.

Additives: Game items that boost the engine performance of your car.

Aerodynamics: The study of how air interacts with a moving object (in this case, a car).

Air filter: A component that filters air coming into the engine from the outside.

Apex: The tightest and slowest part of a corner, usually on the inside.

ASM: Assisted Stability Management prevents understeer and oversteer by applying brakes.

AWD: All-wheel drive. The engine distributes power to all four wheels.

Brakes: The device that slows down your car using friction.

Braking point: The point at which you should brake in a corner.

Bump damping: The shock setting that controls compression resistance.

Camber: Angle of the wheel on the vertical axis.

Carbon fiber: A material consisting of thin, woven fibers known for its strength and light weight, typically used on body parts to reduce weight.

Body/chassis rigidity: Rigidity dictates how much flex occurs in the body, typically during heavy load changes.

Chicane: A set of two turns in an S-shape that is intended to slow the car down.

Clutch: A component that connects and disconnects the engine from the transmission.

Comfort tires: Tires that emphasize ride comfort over performance.

Curb: Strips that line the sides of the track, typically with a striped pattern and made of concrete.

Damper: Also known as the shocks, this can have two adjustable settings: bump and rebound.

Decreasing-radius turn: A turn whose radius gets tighter.

Dirt tires: Tires with deeper groves, used on gravel and dirt courses.

Downforce: The downward thrust created by a car's aerodynamic parts.

Driving Line: The game's suggest racing line, which includes braking points.

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ECU: Engine Control Unit. An electronic device that regulates fuel, timing, and other engine functions.

Exhaust: Typically refers to the tubing from the bottom of the car to the exhaust tip.

Exhaust manifold: The tubing that collects gas expelled from engine cylinders.

FF: Front-engine, front-wheel drive.

Flywheel: A drivetrain component that stores inertia to smooth out engine pulses.

Formula One: A racing venue characterized by open-wheeled, single-seat race cars.

FR: Front-engine, rear-wheel drive.

FWD: Front-wheel drive. The engine delivers power to the front wheels.

Hairpin turn: A tight turn (usually 180 degrees) characterized by low speeds.

Increasing-radius turn: A turn whose radius starts off tighter and then eases up.

Intake manifold: An engine component that delivers air or air/fuel mixture into the engine.

Kink: A turn with a slight bend.

Load: How weight shifts in the car when it's in motion.

LSD: Limited-Slip Differential. A device that limits speed differences between the left and right wheels.

MR: Mid-engine, rear-wheel drive.

Naturally-aspirated: Engines that don't use forced induction.

Neutral (handling): A characteristic where the car neither understeers nor oversteers.

Nitrous Oxide: An additive that gives temporary boost when activated.

Oversteer: A condition in which the rear wheels slide out more than the front.

Podium: A platform showcasing the top three drivers in a race.

Push: See Understeer.

Racing line: The imaginary line that a driver takes to navigate a course.

Racing tires: High-performance tires used exclusively for racing, with greater grip than sports tires. The softer the tire, the better grip but also the shorter the lifespan.

Rain tires: Divided into full and intermediate, full rain tires are for heavy rain conditions; intermediate rain tires work for light rain.

Rally racing: A form of racing typically involving heavily-modified production cars and off-road courses.

Rebound: The extending motion in the shock. Stiffer rebound slows the extension speed.

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RR: Rear-engine, rear-wheel drive.

RWD: Real-wheel drive. The engine delivers power to the rear wheels.

Skid Recovery Force: An in-game option that prevents the car from fishtailing out of control.

Snow tires: Tires with grooves and/or spikes, specifically for snow-covered paths.

Sports tires: Tires that can be used on normal roads but perform better than comfort tires. Softer tires provide better grip at the cost of longevity.

Supercharger: A forced induction device that uses the engine's crankshaft to force air into the engine's combustion chamber.

Suspension: The system of components that includes the shocks, springs, and sway bars.

Sway bar: A bar that connects the left and right side of the car and resists a vehicle's rolling motion.

Sweeper: A turn characterized by a gradual arc.

TCS: Traction Control System. Regulates how much engine power is sent to the wheels when the computer detects wheelspin.

Toe: The angle of the tires on a longitudinal axis.

Transmission: The gearbox of the car, which transfers power from the engine to the wheels.

Turbo: A forced induction device that uses exhaust gases to force more air into the engine.

Understeer: The handling characteristic in which the car resists turning.

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Written by Akitomo Sugawara

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Aki Sugawara grew up spending countless hours gaming, much to the chagrin of his well-meaning parents who insisted it would lead nowhere. From geeky flight sims to car racing to sports games and RPGs, he's enjoyed a bit of everything. A diehard Grand Turismo fan, he actually enjoys endurance races and lapping the same track for hours on end. Aki has served as an editor and content producer for GamePro Magazine, writing reviews, previews, news and feature articles. He also worked as an editor for IGN.com, occasionally contributing to its automotive portal site.