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DUCHENNE DASH

Training and nutrition guide 2027



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1. Introduction

Taking on 300km in 24 hours is no small feat, it is a huge challenge.

The Duchenne Dash is a powerful movement built on teamwork, determination, and a shared commitment to ending Duchenne. Riders of all abilities come together as one team, supported every step of the way, to take on an extraordinary challenge with extraordinary purpose.

This guide is designed to help you prepare to take on this challenge giving you the knowledge, skills and kit guidance you need to reach Paris confidently and enjoy the Dash experience. It covers training, kit and bike setup, nutrition before, during and after the event, and details of our essential skills sessions.

Whether you are a first-time Dasher or a returning rider looking to sharpen your edge, you will find everything you need to train smart, ride strong, and arrive in Paris with a smile on your face!

2. Meet Will Pearson and Forge 1860

We developed this guide in partnership with Will Pearson, our Lead Ride Captain and long-time Duchenne Dash supporter. Will is a former elite cyclist with decades of experience leading group rides and preparing riders of all levels for endurance events.

Will co-founded Forge1860, a boutique cycling destination in East Sheen that combines a Pearson bike showroom, café, bike fitting studio and workshop under one roof. Forge1860's mission is to deliver the complete cyclist experience, expert advice, precision servicing, and community.

As a Duchenne Dash partner, Forge1860 offers all Dashers:

- 10% discount on clothing, parts, and accessories
- £70 off a three-hour Precision Bike Fit session
- Access to Will's exclusive Cycling Skills Sessions in Richmond Park (more info on pages 7-8)

You can learn more and book services directly at www.forge1860.com



3. Preparing for the Dash

It is all in the preparation!

The more you put into your training the more enjoyment you will get out of the Dash itself.

Familiarising yourself with and incorporating as many 'Dash-Day' regimes and routines into your training and practice rides as you can, as early as possible, will ensure you are ready when the event comes around.

These are our top tips:

- **Buy new kit early and train in it.** New kit can be uncomfortable and not perform as you were hoping/expecting this includes bikes, clothing and accessories.
- **Trial any energy products.** Do not leave it until event day to try new gels and drinks. Test out new products you plan to use on the Dash, well in advance, to avoid any adverse reactions on Dash Day itself.
- **Practice eating and drinking on your bike. It's not as easy as it sounds but practicing and nailing eating and drinking whilst** moving/pedaling is a game changer! Ensure you have access to snacks which provide a good source of energy and are easy to consume (and digest!). These might include flapjacks, energy bars, jelly babies, bananas etc. Remember to avoid products which are hard to access, hard to chew, or that could cause you to choke.

Snacks on the Dash:

- We will provide well stocked rest stops throughout the ride (more info on page 6). Snacks will include 'real' food, flap jacks, bananas, sweets, drinks, crisps, nuts etc.
- We do not provide any energy gels or sachets – everyone has different tastes and has their own preferred products, so we recommend that Dashers bring their own for the ride.

4. Bike maintenance and setup

It is important to ensure that your bike is in tip-top condition for your training and for the Dash itself. Give it a good wash if it hasn't had one in a while and maybe even treat it to a thorough service at Forge1860, to ensure that everything is running sweetly.

When performing maintenance, particular areas to pay attention to are:

- **Tyres:** Check that they are free from cuts and have sufficient tread. If you have been having more punctures than usual recently, it is a sign that your tyres need changing (no TUB tyres).
- **Brake blocks:** Check that the pads have plenty of life left in them and replace if necessary.
- **Gearing:** Ensuring you have the correct gear ratios on the bike can make an enormous difference to your enjoyment of the event. Compact chainsets are becoming standard issue in



sportive circles now, offering a lower range of gears for tackling the hills. 50-34 chainrings combined with 11-28 or 11-34 cassette is a popular setup that would suffice for the moderate undulation of the route to Paris.

Remember: This ride is NOT a race. As such, super lightweight race tyres are not recommended. You are strongly advised to use tyres with some puncture protection such as Schwalbe Durano Plus or Continental Gator Skins, which will help reduce or eliminate the number of punctures and enhance your ride experience.

Optimising your riding position
Will and his team run comprehensive **Precision Bike Fit** sessions which provide vital information to improve and optimise a rider's position. These sessions ensure the setup of your bike feels natural and efficient so you can get the most out of it and ride comfortably.

You can find more information and if you are interested book a bike fit session here.

5. Training programme

Your key aims
- Aim to build a good fitness base
- Push yourself to ride as much as possible
- Build up your time in the saddle
- Ride the whole programme and you will make it from London to Paris and back again!
- Ride safe and enjoy the distance.

You may not complete every training ride and that is okay. The key is consistency and preparation. Every session in the saddle builds confidence, strength, and connection with your fellow Dashers.

The more you do, the better you will feel on the road to Paris.

October – December
- Base miles will serve you well into the new year when you will need to ramp up your training.
- Aim to put in a ride that stretches you and cover a longer distance than you would in your normal outings at least once a month.
- If you can, add to this with some indoor miles in spin studios or on a home trainer, this will help you to maintain your fitness at a good level through the darker and colder winter months.

January/February
- **Monday to Friday:** Two rides at a minimum of one hour, or three commutes, which should get your heart rate going and cause some shortness of breath!
- **Weekends:** Try to get out for longer rides to get used to your kit and bike. You should be aiming for rides of around 40-50 kms and introducing some hills.



March

- **Monday to Friday:** Two rides at a minimum of one hour, or three commutes, which should cause some shortness of breath!
- **Weekends:** Increase your weekend rides to build up your time in the saddle. You should be aiming for rides of around 60-80 kms. Build your pace and continue to incorporate hills into your routes.

April

- **Monday to Friday:** Two rides at a minimum, increasing to 1.5 hours or four commutes. Ride harder and push yourself on hills, with increased intervals on the flat.
- **Weekends:** Further increase your distance, pushing up towards 100-120 km towards the end of the month, which should be your longest ride before the Dash.

May

- Tapering and final preparation time.
- Reduce time in the saddle and reduce intensity of your efforts in the lead up to the event to rest the body and build up energy reserves.

6. Nutrition and fuel strategy

You may have the speed and stamina, but if you are not fueling your long-distance rides, you could be hindering your progress more than you realise. Even the best riders only have enough glycogen stored for a couple of hours of hard cycling, and it is vital your stocks are replenished or you will become exhausted.

In this section, we include helpful information on what to eat and drink before, during and after a long ride to optimize your performance and make your journey to Paris as enjoyable as possible.

Pre-Event

What should I eat the night before?

It all starts with what you eat the night before a big ride, be it a long training ride, or the Dash itself.

If you have ever needed an excuse for a huge dinner, this is it. You need to be eating as many carbohydrates in this meal as possible (ever heard of the phrase “carb loading”?), as this will give you a higher glycogen level for the next day. Ideas include pasta with vegetables and garlic bread, and don’t forget dessert!

When and what should I eat before the ride?

On the day of the ride, try to eat a good breakfast before you leave for Herne Hill. Ideally this will be high in carbohydrates with some protein to support you over a long-distance. Ideas include oats or porridge with banana or berries, or eggs, or scrambled tofu as a vegan alternative. Make sure you pile up the bowl! You want the focus to be on carbohydrates but make sure the food you pick makes you feel comfortable and does not cause any gastrointestinal symptoms.

A nutritious, high protein, high energy lunch will be served at Herne Hill before we depart.



During the event

How often should I eat while riding?

Snacking is key! Your carbohydrate intake needs to be carefully managed, having around 30-60 grams of carbs EVERY hour. It may seem like a lot, but 40g can be met by simply having a banana, some sweets, or an oat bar with a carbohydrate gel.

But won't this make me feel full?

Making sure the foods you choose have a high glucose content is important to avoid discomfort and nausea while riding. Where possible, try to include some carbohydrate-electrolyte sports drinks in addition to food, as they will help to stop this feeling.

Rest stops enroute

Rest stops are scheduled approximately every 50 kms along the Dash route, and these stops are well-stocked with a wide variety of sweet and savory snacks, fruit, hot coffee and much more.

Real food (proper meals) will also be offered as follows throughout the event:

UK route (approx. 95km)

- 0km: Lunch will be served before we depart from Herne Hill
- 55km (approx.): Rest stop with snacks and hot coffee
- 95km (approx.): A hot dinner (real food) in Newhaven prior to boarding the ferry

French route (approx. 200km)

In Newhaven, you'll be given a breakfast bag packed full of goodies to enjoy when you wake up on the ferry and before we set off again.

- 35km (approx.): Rest stop with snacks and hot coffee
- 85km (approx.): A continental breakfast
- 110km (approx.): Rest stop with snacks and hot coffee
- 160km (approx.): Lunch consisting of a baguette, patisserie, fruit.

Reminder: Please provide your own energy gels and sachets for the ride. These can be kept in your day bag, in the support vehicle which travels with your group.

After the event

When should I eat after my ride?

Making sure you eat within an hour of getting off the bike is vital, as after training your body needs nutrients for repairing muscles. They've just worked extremely hard after all...

It is common not to feel hungry post-event, so drinking fluids that contain both carbohydrates and protein could be the way to replenish easily (and quickly). Both carbohydrates and protein are critical for recovery. Carbohydrates are the body's main fuel and with limited stores, these need to be replaced for your body to function effectively. Protein is vital for the growth and repair of muscle tissue. Exercise can cause the breakdown of the muscle tissue when they are overloaded, so making sure you have a sufficient source of protein post-workout, can reduce muscle soreness the next day.



In Paris

Upon arrival in Paris, post-ride celebrations will take place which will include food and drink. This might feel like the best food and drink you have ever enjoyed!

Longer term recovery

Remember, your body has been pushed to the extreme. It is important to ensure you rest properly, hydrate with plenty of water and eat a balanced diet following this kind of event. Use it as an excuse to relax the next day! Try going on a gentle walk to maintain mobility and do a stretch session or light yoga to promote recovery.

7. Paced cycling groups

To ensure the Dash is well-paced, safe and enjoyable, there will be four paced speed groups, each cycling at differing speeds, for slightly varying abilities. These will be led by our wonderful team of experienced Ride Captains.

You will be required to select your preferred group in the spring, and this should be based on your pace and ability over 300km, so it is vital your training is well underway by this point.

Please be advised that due to health and safety regulations, there will be no movement between groups on the ride. If you are cycling as part of a team and wish to cycle together this will be possible, but you'll all need to be comfortable at the selected speed and agree which group would suit the whole team best in advance.

There are huge benefits to cycling in a peloton, including the obvious advantages of slip-streaming and drafting. Riding in the middle of a well-developed group can allow for a significant reduction in drag (10-15%) which helps cyclists to conserve energy.

Remember: This ride is NOT a race. Safety is our number one priority. We will all arrive in Paris at the same time.

The speeds for each of the four groups will be as follows:

- Strong and steady riders: average 17mph/27kph
- Confident riders: average 16mph/25kph
- Determined riders: average 15mph/23kph
- Tenacious riders: average 14mph/22kph

Should you have any questions or queries about training or paced cycling groups please do not hesitate to contact Emily: Emily.waring@duchenneuk.org

8. Will's Cycling Skills Sessions

The Duchenne Dash is an endurance cycling challenge and, as such, we strongly recommend that all our cyclists undertake a suitable amount of training to ensure you can complete the ride safely and enjoyably.

Ahead of the Dash in 2027, Will Pearson will once again lead two **Cycling Skills Sessions**, to help you prepare for your challenge. These two-hour sessions will take place in and around Richmond



Park. The aim is to build on your training and teach you some key skills to help you succeed. These sessions will take place on the following dates:

- **Saturday 13th March 2027**
- **Saturday 24th April 2027**

We will offer novice and advanced groups on the day. The two groups will cover the areas set out below. The sessions are designed to enhance your cycling skills. You'll also have the opportunity to speak to our Ride Captains and other experienced Dashers and find out more about what to expect and to seek training tips and kit recommendations.

Saturday 13th March: Session 1

Novice

- Basic gear use discipline
- Following and holding a wheel
- Climbing discipline
- Descending discipline
- Drinking from a bottle when riding
- Basic hand signals
- Group riding and positioning

Advanced

- Riding in close proximity to other riders
- Climbing like a pro
- Descending like a pro
- Taking corners like a pro
- Hand signals revisited
- Through and off (rotating lead place

Saturday 24th April: Session 2

Novice

- Basics gear use discipline
- Following a wheel
- Climbing discipline
- Descending
- Drinking from a bottle when riding
- Basic hand signals
- Group riding

Advanced

- Riding as a 'domestique'
- Sprinting skills
- Riding faster on climbs
- Descending faster without pedaling
- Hand signals revisited
- Through and off (rotating lead place)
- Flying lap

For any first-time Dashers, especially those who have not undertaken a huge amount of cycling previously, we **strongly recommend** that you try to sign up for at least one of the skills sessions. They really are hugely valuable and will help make your Dash experience a more positive one.

Meeting time: 08:30, to cycle as a group to Richmond Park

Meeting point: Forge1860, 232 Upper Richmond Road West, East Sheen, London, SW14 8AG - www.forge1860.com

To book a place on one (or both) of Will's Cycling Skill Sessions, please sign up via the following link, and complete the disclaimer: https://forms.gle/J4LWLvJE1ihJtMmH6



9. Further support

Strava

To further complement your training, we have created a Dash Strava Club.

We strongly recommend that everyone joins this group and uses it throughout their training. We will share training advice, information about our training sessions. It can also help you to stay motivated and dedicated to your training.

Facebook

Since our Dashers are a friendly bunch, we have started a community Facebook page and encourage all 2027 Dashers to join and get involved! Get to know your fellow Dashers before you meet at the start line.

We'll will share Dash memories, training tips and vital information about training rides and the Dash itself.

WhatsApp

You can also join our informal WhatsApp group with our Ride Captains to ask questions or queries you may have about your Dash preparation.

Duchenne Dash 2027

WhatsApp group

Please note: Any advice, feedback or opinions shared in this group reflect the views of the individual contributors and do not necessarily represent the views of Duchenne UK.

For any further questions about your Dash participation or fundraising, please contact: dash@duchenneuk.org

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