



TRIATHLON TERMINOLOGY

Here are some common terms and definitions used when referring to triathlons:

- **Aerobic-**
Aerobic means with oxygen and refers to the use of oxygen in the body's energy production process. Aerobic exercise is moderate in intensity and performed over long periods of time.
- **Age Groupers-**
The term age grouper refers to triathletes in the racing community who do not hold professional or elite status. In race events, age groupers will compete among racers in their age groups, which are typically divided up into five year ranges.
- **Anaerobic-**
Anaerobic means without oxygen and refers to the ability of the body to perform at a high intensity where oxygen is in short supply. Anaerobic exercise is done in short duration at a high intensity level.
- **Aerobar-**
Aerobars are extensions on the bicycle's handlebar that allow cyclists to position their body in a more aerodynamic form.
- **Anti-fog Solution-**
Anti-fog solutions are designed to prevent goggle lenses from fogging up during the swim portion of a race.
- **Body Marking-**
Body marking happens during race check-in. It is when information such as race number and age are written on athlete's upper-arms and calves to assist race officials during an event.
- **Bonk-**
An athlete who has "bonked" has reached the point where they can go no further. Fatigue has taken over and exhaustion has set in.
- **Brick-**
Workouts where a bike ride is immediately followed by a run.
- **Dehydration-**
Dehydration occurs when the amount of water leaving the body exceeds the amount of water being taken in. Due to the high intensity of activity performed during a triathlon, risks for dehydration increase. Symptoms can range from mild to life-threatening. Replenishing liquids during the race is key to preventing dehydration.
- **Disqualification (DQ)-**
Disqualification is the harshest penalty that can be handed down to a racer. Disqualified racers are deprived the ability to compete in or win a race due a violation of the rules.
- **Drafting-**
Drafting can occur during the cycling leg of a triathlon. Drafting is the event where two or more cyclists ride close together in an effort to reduce wind resistance. Drafting is usually illegal in most races.



TRIATHLON TERMINOLOGY

- **Draft Zone-**

Per USAT rules, the draft zone is defined as “...a rectangular area seven meters long and two meters wide surrounding each bicycle. The longer sides of the zone begin at the leading edge of the front wheel and run backward parallel to the bicycle; the front wheel divides the short side of the zone into two equal parts.”

- **Electrolytes-**

Electrolytes are nutrients in the body which are critical for organ functioning. These nutrients include: sodium, potassium, chloride, calcium, and phosphate.

- **Elite-**

Elite triathletes are triathletes who are experienced, highly competitive, and meet the series of qualifications of the particular race sanctioning committee. Elite triathletes can also be referred to as professional triathletes, and often times have their own wave during competitions.

- **Heart Rate Monitor (HRM)-**

A heart rate monitor is a device that can be used during activity that records/displays your current heart rate. Heart rate monitors are vital to tracking your target heart rate during exercise.

- **Hydration-**

Hydration is simply the act of providing adequate water to the body. Hydration is an important element of triathlon racing as well as other endurance sports due to the high intensity of the activity involved.

- **Hyponatremia-**

Hyponatremia is a condition in which there is an electrolyte imbalance in the body. Sodium levels in the blood stream can severely drop to when athletes drink excessive water amounts after prolonged physical activity.

- **International Triathlon Union (ITU)-**

The International Triathlon Union (ITU) was founded in 1989 in Avignon, France, the site of the first official world championships. The primary race of the ITU is the Olympic distance race. The ITU sanctions and organizes a World Cup series of these races every year, culminating in an annual World Championship for elite pro-triathletes, junior pro-triathletes and amateur athletes in 5-year age-groups.

- **Lactate Threshold (LT)-**

During exercise, lactic acid is produced by muscles. Lactate threshold is the point at which more lactic acid is produced than the body is able to process. At this point lactic acid begins to build up in the blood stream. Lactate threshold is an important measure for endurance sports and can be greatly increased with training.

- **Maximum Heart Rate (MHR)-**

Maximum heart rate is highest number of times a heart can contract in the span of one minute. It should not be confused with target heart rate, as it is one of the values used to determine an individual's target heart rate.

- **Pronation-**

Pronation is when a person places more of their body weight on the inside part of the foot when walking/running.



TRIATHLON TERMINOLOGY

- **Supination-**
Supination is when a person places more of their body weight on the outside part of the foot when walking/running.
- **Swim Aids-**
Swim aids are devices used during swim training to improve strength and form. They include: fins, paddles, kickboards, and pull buoys.
- **Swim Cap-**
A swim cap is a latex cap that is worn on the head of swimmers to reduce drag caused by hair. Swim caps are sometimes color coded in order to identify age groups or different starting waves during a triathlon.
- **Target Heart Rate-**
Target heart rate is a range of rates that are safe to stay in during periods of exercise. The target heart rate is calculated using your age and percentages of your max heart rate.
- **Transition 1 (T1)-**
T1 is the period between the swim and the bike portions of the triathlon. During this stage, triathletes switch from their swim gear into their cycling gear.
- **Transition 2 (T2)-**
T2 is the period between the bike and run portions of the triathlon. During this stage, triathletes switch from their cycling gear into their running gear.
- **Transition 3 (T3)-**
The post-race party/activities is sometimes referred to as the third transition. During this stage, triathletes switch from race mode to celebration mode.
- **USA Triathlon (USAT)-**
USA Triathlon (USAT) is the national governing body for triathlon, duathlon, aquathlon and winter triathlon, of which it sanctions more than 2000 races each year. The USAT formed in 1982 when the U.S. Triathlon Association and the American Triathlon Association merged. Original membership was only about 1500. In just 25 years, membership has grown to more than 100,000 making it the largest multisport organization in the world.
- **VO2 Max-**
VO2 Max is the measurement of the highest volume of oxygen an individual can utilize during exercise. VO2 Max is often used as a fitness level indicator for endurance athletes. VO2 Max may be used interchangeably with the following terms: maximal oxygen consumption, maximal oxygen uptake, aerobic capacity, and aerobic power.
- **Wave-**
A group of triathletes starting a race. Waves are often staggered and organized by age group and sex.



TRIATHLON TERMINOLOGY

- **World Triathlon Corporation (WTC)-**

The World Triathlon Corporation (WTC) was founded in 1990 and organizes, licenses, and promotes the Ironman Triathlon Series, culminating each year with the Hawaii Ironman Triathlon World Championships. Although the Ironman races are not recognized by the ITU as official world championships, the Hawaii Ironman race is considered by most to be the most prestigious event in the world.