



Westfjords Way Challenge



**Four stages.
Five days.
More than just a race.**

[▶ FAQ](#)



Check back frequently for updates!

What is the course like?

The course is 60% road and 40% gravel. The pavement and gravel is generally good, with the exception of a particularly challenging road on stage 4 - Svalvogar (a rocky gravel road cut into the side of a cliff). The race will provide tide information for the day, but you'll need to be aware of these as it can be unsafe to pass during high tide when water covers the road. There are also several ankle to knee high river crossings on this day.

Most of the elevation comes from mountain passes, which range from 200m [600ft] to 600m [2,000ft]. These are generally mild with a few instances where the grade is above 15%.

What bike should I bring?

All bikes are allowed, and a good rule of thumb is a bike that accommodates the recommended minimum tire width of 40mm. The scouting crew opted for 50mm tires due to the terrain of Svalvogar. Tire clearance is the main thing to consider when choosing a bike and suspension is not necessary for the route.

What's the weather like?

The weather in Iceland can be unpredictable, especially in the Westfjords where wind gusts can blow you off course, and sun can become snow in a matter of minutes. The average max daytime temperature in late June is 11.0°C (51.8°F). Our local weather forecasts can be found [here](#). Due to the timing around summer solstice, we'll also have around 24hrs of daylight.

The race has a scheduled rest/adventure day on July 2, and the race directors observe the ability to modify the schedule to better accommodate any adverse weather conditions.

What should I wear?

Due to the unpredictable weather, we recommend that you bring a variety of clothes and layers. Plan for strong winds, horizontal rain or sunny skies. You should also consider footwear and socks for the water-crossings. Generally it is best to cover four scenarios - warm, dry weather; warm, wet weather; cold, dry weather; and cold, wet weather. Don't forget appropriate gloves and shoe covers.

What will the race registration cost?

Race registration will cost 70,000isk (about \$530) per person.

What does race registration include?

The entry fee includes:

- Entrance to the race, race expo and after party (your first drink is on us!)
- A local Icelandic meal at the end of each of the four stages and breakfast the morning of Stage 2 and Stage 3.
- Tents available for use at the end of each stage

Riders are responsible for:

- Travel, accommodation/campground fees, and all other food expenses
- Ensuring you have the correct gear to be safe and successful.

What will the categories be?

Update this one next week

Why is the race capped at 100 riders?

Since this is the first year of the event, we have determined that 100 riders is the capacity of our accommodations while also keeping the remote nature of the route in mind. We are already dreaming up plans to expand the capacity of the event, and hope to welcome even more riders to future events. We encourage everyone to explore the other options Cycling Westfjords provides for your self-supported adventures which allow you to ride the Westfjords Way on your own schedule while still having a safety net.

What does self-supported mean?

All racers are expected to ride self-supported which means you are required to carry everything you need for four stages of the race. This includes your food, water, clothes, and sleeping arrangements (pad, sleeping bag, pillow, etc.). At this point, any outside help that is used to transport gear or aid you in any way will disqualify your time from the race. This way keeps everyone on a level playing field to ensure fair competition.

How can I book my campsite or hotel rooms in advance?

All riders are guaranteed camping space from June 28-July 3. Prices vary by location. The race has also held beds for 20-30 people at hotels at the end of each stage. In the spirit of equal opportunity, accommodation details and booking instructions will be emailed to all registered riders on January 28.

How are the water crossings?

The water is cold and refreshing and rarely exceeds knee height. They are typically about 10 to 20m wide [30 to 60ft] and can be ridden through. It is recommended to carry an extra pair of socks or river crossing footwear (neoprene socks or walking sandals) depending on your level of comfort desired.

Will the course be marked?

No, the course will not be marked, so it's important to load the route onto your cycling phone and GPS devices. The route and stages are clearly defined on the website and RideWithGPS files, and the official route with all cultural connection and resupply locations will be made available one month prior to the race to registered riders.

Are there aid stations?

No, there are no aid stations. You are responsible for planning your own resupply points. Also note that Cultural Connection points are not aid stations - they are places to rest and interact with Icelandic nature or culture. Some of them include opportunities to purchase food at local restaurants, but the only food that is provided by the race is the meal at the end of each stage. Similarly, there are no mechanical aid stations. Speciality tools and some parts, however, will be available at the end of each stage should you need to make any adjustments beyond the scope of the basic tools you are expected to carry.

What happens if I have a mechanical issue, injury or other extenuating circumstance that prevents me from continuing the race?

All riders will be in contact with race staff via Whatsapp. In case of an emergency, call or message race staff and we will arrange pick up. Pick up by race staff warrants a forfeit of official race time, but riders may continue unofficially on the route. There is 4G service throughout the Westfjords, except for a few certain dead zones so help will always be available in case of an emergency.

Is it easy to find water in the Westfjords?

Clean water is available all along the Westfjords Way route and is safe to drink straight from the stream or waterfall (it really is a dream). There is no need to bring a water filter or excess water storage as there is almost always a stream or waterfall nearby for you to fill up. The race recommends to carry at least two 24oz bottles.

How is my time tracked?

Your time for each stage starts and ends when you “check in” via Whatsapp. Every rider will be in contact with race staff and will send a message with a time stamped selfie marking their start of each stage. A timestap app will be recommended and utilized for the race. You may start the stage at any time, but we highly recommend a start time between 5-7am. When you arrive at a Cultural Connection point, take a time stamped selfie to ‘check out’ and send it in a message via Whatsapp. When you’re ready to ride, take one more selfie. And send it to us as soon as you are able. When you arrive at the end of the stage, take a final selfie and submit via Whatsapp so race staff can calculate your total time for the day.

Stats will be updated on cyclingwestfjords.com at the end of each stage.

Are there cut-off points?

Each stage is 24 hours long, beginning at 5am on June 29. You must complete each stage within the 24 hour period, with the exception of the “Adventure Day” currently scheduled for July 2. This day may be moved at the race directors’ discretion depending on weather.

All riders will be in contact with the race staff via Whatsapp. If you are unable to complete a stage in time, you will need to get in touch with race staff to communicate your ETA and/or new plan. The race anticipates all riders will complete each stage by midnight. Riders will need to communicate with race staff in the event the full 24 hour cutoff time is needed. If you need to forfeit the race or are in an emergency situation, staff will be available to arrange a pick up.

To keep on schedule, we highly recommended a start time of 5-7am and the race anticipates finish times to be between 4pm and midnight.

You should also keep in mind the following:

1. Only your ride time is counted. You will start and end each stage via a time stamped photo. Cultural Connection points are also documented by taking a time stamped selfie at the arrival and departure of the Cultural Connection. The time spent at Cultural Connections will be deducted from your final stage time. This is intended to encourage interaction with local nature and culture.
2. We highly recommend you plan your rides so you can meet us at each stage end-point, where you will eat your local Icelandic meal, relax in hot pots and enjoy the evening with fellow riders.

Are cell phones required?

Yes, cell phones with international data plans are required to participate in the race. All riders will be required to download a time-stamp photo app and Whatsapp for communication with race staff.

Additionally, the race will feature a dotwatcher and a capable GPS device will either need to be supplied or rented from the race.

How is cell service in the Westfjords?

There is generally 4G service in most parts of the Westfjords, with the exception of a few dead zones. If you are in an area without coverage, you can still take your time stamped photos. Just try sending again the next time you stop!

Can I see the full route GPX file?

The route and stages are available on our website and RideWithGPS. The final route files, which will include all resupply points and Cultural Connections will be available to registered riders at the beginning of April.

How are the resupply points?

In the official route files, we will provide all resupply points including grocery stores and restaurants. Stage 1 does not have a designated resupply point, but there are two hotel/restaurants along the route. Each stage after that has at least one resupply point/grocery store. In the spirit of a self-supported race, riders are responsible for researching and knowing the most up-to-date information on opening hours and available services.

Why am I required to bring a bivvy?

Since some riders will choose to purchase hotel rooms during the race, we decided to offer tents to all other riders. This means that no one has to carry the weight of a tent if they prefer not to. However, due to long days and the unpredictable nature of the route, there is a chance you may need to seek shelter during a stage. Since there are very few places to seek shelter on the route, we want to make sure that each rider can find appropriate shelter in the event of emergency or adverse weather. All riders, including those with hotel rooms will be required to have, at the minimum, an emergency bivvy that could be used if these situations occur.

Have a question we didn't answer here? We will update the FAQ often, so be sure to check back for updates. You can also email us your questions at cyclingwestfjords@gmail.com or message us on Instagram/Facebook.