



Rotary Soap Box Derby

Race Rules & Car Specifications Race Rules

By virtue of their registration, participants, or the parents/guardians of participants who are minors, have agreed to render harmless the Mitchell Rotary Club, car inspection volunteers and race volunteers from any consequences arising from participating in the soap box derby.

General Rules

1. Participants MUST be registered by Wednesday June 12, 2026.
2. All drivers must produce signed parental consent and waiver form,
3. Your child must be 8 years of age or older (on or before July 1, 2026) to participate as a driver. Proof of age must be shown to the Registrar on Derby Day.
4. Participants must arrive between 7:30 – 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday July 1, 2026. Participants must remain available to race at any time until all his/her races are finished.
5. Your car will be issued an official inspection sticker after it has passed inspection. No alterations will be done to the car once it has been inspected.
6. Cars may be inspected prior to each race to ensure they are deemed safe for racing. Ruling by the designated inspectors shall not be challenged. Cars rejected by the inspector/inspection crew must be removed immediately from the starting location area.
7. If your car needs repair during the races and you are called upon to race you will be given one run's grace period (or about 10 minutes) you must be ready to race when your number is called for a second time however, or you will be eliminated. This action is taken so as not to slow down the race.
8. **When racing, drivers must wear a long sleeve shirt, long pants, closed shoes, and protective head gear i.e., snow mobile/motorcycle helmet with chin strap. (Bike helmets are not an option.)**
9. The race judges' decision is final and shall not be contested.

RACE NOTES

Race Classes

- Junior Division
Ages 8 - 11 years
- Senior Class
12 – 16 years

Trophies will be awarded to the winners of each division.

The soap box cars will also be judged and awarded trophies in the following categories:

- Best Engineered soap box car
- Most original paint design
- Best novelty soap box car
- Best Overall soap box car
- Safest soap box car

There will be two starting officials to ensure fair starts and two officials at the finish line; the first car to cross the finish line will win.

It is expected that all drivers and people in the pit crew will always act in a sportsmanlike manner. Anyone that does not uphold the requests of the Race Officials may be expelled from the race.

Most important rule ... HAVE SOME FUN and BE A GOOD SPORTSPERSON!

The Soap Box Car

To maintain fairness and family fun we require ONLY home-built soap box cars. **No professionally constructed and purchased entries will be allowed.**

To ensure a competitive atmosphere, the vehicle must conform to the following specifications. The following rules have been established to ensure better safety for the racers.

This is gravity racing. No other form of motive power is allowed.

Vehicle Rules

1. **VERY IMPORTANT – The car MUST FIT THE DRIVER.** Drivers must be able to get in and out of the car easily and operate steering/brake in the normal seated position without stretching or straining.
2. Since ramp starting will be used, you **must** build your cars, so it conforms to the minimum and maximum dimensions on the attached rules and a sketch.
3. Cars must run on four wheels, two front and two rear. Minimum diameter is eight (8”) inches. Wheels from manufacturers may not be modified but must be used “as is”. Wheels may not be made of wood.
4. Measures must be taken to prevent wheels from departing the cart when in use. Use cotter pins or other positive means to keep the wheels in place.
5. Fasteners used in the steering and brake systems must be prevented from loosening when in use by using lock nuts, cotter pins, wire tying or other means.
6. Minimize front and rear overhang to prevent getting hung up on the starting ramps.
7. All basic structure parts must be securely fastened to each other using bolts, screws, or other suitable hardware. Plywood and solid wood are permitted structural materials. Particle or strand type board is not permitted for any structural part. The basic structure is defined as the chassis on which the driver sits and to which the axles, steering and brake mechanisms, and body shell are attached. The car body or shell may be part of the basic structure. It must be made of ridged impact resistant material such as wood Fiberglass or plastic. (NO METAL)
8. Back and forth movement of either front wheel shall be limited to one inch. Stops must be installed to prevent oversteering. Steering movement must be smooth.
9. The driver must sit in the car, facing forward and controlling the car using only hands and feet.
10. The centre of gravity, with the driver in place, should be as low as possible without violating the minimum road clearance (3”) specifications (including the brake).
11. The head cannot be confined by the vehicle.
12. Legs and feet must be enclosed.
13. No sharp or protruding objects on the exterior or interior.
14. The car should have a nose and or a bumper with a tow hook mounted to tow the vehicle back up to the start line.
15. The car number must be visible from both sides if the vehicle.

Vehicle Specifications (see diagram)

1. The maximum length will be 80 inches or 203.3 centimeters.
2. Minimum ground clearance of 3” inches or 7.62 centimeters and a maximum of 7” inches when the driver is seated in the vehicle.
3. Minimum wheelbase of 48” inches (122 centimeters) and a maximum of 54” inches (137.16 centimeters). (The distance between the center of the front and rear wheels of the left and right wheels)
4. The width between the wheels must be a minimum of 30” inches (76 centimeters) and a maximum of 36” inches (91.44 centimeters).
5. The soap box height will be no taller than 28” inches (71 centimeters) from the ground.
6. The soap box must have an effective braking system. We require a drag brake which is easy to operate, and which will stop the vehicle quickly and safely. It must be possible to operate the brake without losing control of the vehicle and without damaging the road surface. If using drag clutches, the part touching the road must be made of wood or rubber.
7. Steering must be by wheel or bar. **Rope or foot-controlled steering systems are not allowed.** Steering must not be loose.
8. Added weight must be secured safely.