



EVENT PLANNING

(Borrowed from, with permission, then edited from our good friends at PDX MINI)

A Club Run can be anything from a two hour fun drive to an overnight trip to somewhere special. If the driving is fun, there doesn't even have to be anything at the destination. For overnight trips just someplace to stay the night at a reasonable cost and relax and socialize after a fun day of driving is all that's needed. Almost anything is a potential MINI Tour. Use your imagination!

Planning a full year of club activities by one person is a daunting task. Planning one event is really easy to do. Do you have favorite place? A favorite stretch of road? Perhaps an event that you love to go to each year? Any one of these is an excellent start for planning a Club Run.

With an idea of an end location or a stretch of road you can begin to plan your run. Get out a map, preferably a newer county map and/or the current Thomas Guide or Atlas and start looking for curvy, twisty roads in the areas of your ending place or favorite roads. Start linking them together in what looks like a fun drive. Keep this up until you have worked your way back to a good starting location with plenty of parking and one that's easy to find. Sometimes it's helpful to simply pick a start location that makes sense to you due to your location or its central location. Remember that we have to caravan out of where ever we start from, so a minimum of traffic lights is a big plus.

Once you have a start location, a general route formed from fun looking roads connected together and a final destination, then **GO DRIVE IT!** Make sure to take the maps along with you - this part of the fun. Maps don't always show true conditions. Some don't differentiate pavement from gravel. Some roads that look great on the map are dull when you drive them in a MINI. Other roads that don't look like much turn out to be beautifully scenic or twistier than they appear on the map; driving the route is part of the process. Do not expect the first route you select to be the final one.

After your first drive you will no doubt have some changes to make. Some you may have already made on the first trip out. Re-plan your route and type up a new route sheet with the directions. Make sure to have a space in front of the directions to write down the actual mileage as you drive it. This easier with a helper. Now go drive it again. This time, keep track of your mileage and your time from start to finish. It's important to have an idea of how long your drive will take. Also keep in mind that it's always faster with one MINI than it is with 10 or 20+. Believe it or not, the average speed for most runs is about 35-45 mph. On this trip you should have a pretty good idea of how your route is shaping up. Start thinking about a potty stop about every 2 hours. People with full bladders don't enjoy scenic drives as much as relaxed ones.

You're almost finished! You now have a starting point, a route you like, a final destination, have planned your potty stops and re-grouping points. If you're not totally confident you need to drive the route again and check your work. Even better, let someone else drive it, following your directions while you ride as passenger. This will point out any confusing issues, but also make you more familiar with the route so that when you lead it, you won't need to refer to the directions nearly as much. Ideally, you should have driven the final route at least two times by the time you lead the event. Once you have planned a couple of runs, you will really want to invest in mapping software like MS Map Point or a Streets and Atlas program. A program will save you hours of planning and many have the ability to update road construction and conditions and the mileage is automatically calculated.

In a nutshell, that's how to plan a Club Run! I invite you all to give it a try and I challenge you to have fun doing it! It's easy and the rewards of leading the club's members around for a day are wonderful. Besides, didn't you always want to be in front of a long line of MINI's?