

What sets the AVA apart from other walking experiences is the quality of our walks. Many Volkssporters believe the AVA: Trailmaster Guide and Certification Examination manual is only intended for those wishing to become certified AVA Trailmasters. In fact, this manual is a wonderful resource for everyone and especially club trailmasters (available at <http://ava.org/publications.php>). The table of contents is very helpful if you have a specific issue you want to look up. Tom Baltes discussed Route Mapping in a previous Checkpoint.

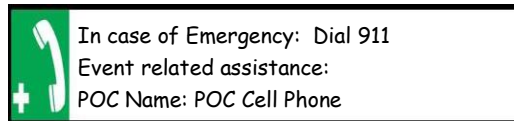
Some key guidelines from the Trailmaster Guide that lead to great trails and trail instructions

- 1) "The simplest and perhaps the best way to prepare instructions is in a two column format so the sheet can be folded in half lengthwise. Then the sheet can be folded again and once again so that the instructions you are reading are visible and the sheet is now the approximate size of your palm."
- 2) "Never write directions in paragraph form with multiple changes of direction. Never ever write in all capital letters. Both make directions more difficult to read. "
- 3) "The instructions should be numbered – one number, one turn." "... do NOT use east, west, north or south. If the sun is not out, it is too difficult to know where north is – unless you are from the area."
- 4) "All elevations over 3500 feet must be included in written description of an event. All walk directions must include a copyright symbol © and the year."
- 5) "Be sure that the map and the directions agree."
- 6) "Another tip for instructions is to add "k" (km) markers. You must measure the route anyway, so when you are measuring, note the place where the "k" (km) marks change."

Good practices not found in the current Trailmaster Guide (some may be added to AVA Policy Manual) :

- 1) Include the "Accident Notification Box" graphic on the first page of walk instructions.

<http://ava.org/graphics.php>



- 2) All walk instructions should include the Club Name and Start/Finish address.
- 3) All walk instructions must include this phrase (preferably in boldly outlined text box):

These walk directions and maps may only be used in conjunction with a signed American Volkssport Association athletic waiver. All other uses are prohibited.

- 4) Have a key to the abbreviations used in your instructions. Such as:

Abbreviations used:

ns – No Sign. There is no street sign.

C&P – Cross and/or Pass. [Usage – {C&P: 1st St and 2nd St.}]

- 5) Capitalize and Bold Font for **LEFT** and **RIGHT** used in the instructions. Telling walkers what streets they will cross/pass before the next turn is very reassuring they are on the right track.
- 6) Walk the route with someone unfamiliar with the walk before the start date. Have them lead the walk by reading the instructions and map. They can let you know of any points of confusion or discrepancies. Instructions should be especially clear for YRE and seasonal events which typically do not have AVA trail markers.

Please also read the AVA Policy Manual, especially Section 4: Volkssporting IVV Events

http://ava.org/policymanual/Policy_Manual_2017.pdf