

12 Step Program for Hares

by Shoeless Ho

STEP 1: Signing up

Signing up to hare is simple. All you have to do is find the Hare Raiser for the hash you want to hare for and tell him/her that you want to sign up. The Hare Raiser will tell you what days are available and sign you up for the date you want. Contact info for many Hare Raisers can be found on SDH3.com

- The person who signs up with the Hare Raiser is the Lead Hare by default.
- The Lead Hare is responsible for all the details and for coordinating with the co-hares.
- When signing up, exchange e-mails and phone numbers with the Hare Raiser
 - Do **NOT** go off grid after signing up. You will give your Hare Raiser a heart attack.

STEP 2: Recruiting Co-Hares

Choose your co-hares carefully. Choose people you can count on and trust, but who also work well with you so that it's a fun experience. Your best friend in the hash isn't always the best co-hare.

- Start thinking about what needs to be done and who will do which tasks. Look for co-hares who have skills/resources that fit your needs. (schedule/transportation/etc)
- For most trails, I recommend having at least two co-hares. This usually allows for enough manpower to lay trail and host beerchecks.
- At some hashes a certain number of hares get to run free.
- Food Hares. If the hash includes food at the end, it may be the responsibility of the hares to supply the food, or there may be a Snackmeister and/or Foodmeister who will handle the food duties. If you're not sure, check with the hare raiser.

STEP 3: Budgets

The hares are usually budgeted an amount of money to cover the costs of their beerchecks, flour, and chalk. At some hashes, the hares are budgeted a flat rate regardless of how many people show up. At other hashes, such as SDH3 the budgets are estimated based on expected attendance.

- Ask your Hash Cash what your budget is for your trail and how you will be reimbursed.
- Be sure to keep ALL receipts. After the hash, turn them into the Hash Cash for reimbursement.
 - They may pay you back on the spot or they will reimburse you by mail.
 - Some hashes may require you to fill out a form to turn in with your receipts. Ask if this is the case.
- For simplicity sake, it may be easier to have one person purchase all the supplies so that they're all on one receipt.

STEP 4: The ON-IN

The first part of trail to figure out should be the location of the on-in. You could have the greatest trail in the world, but if you don't have an On-In, it's not a hash. There are two main styles of hashes in the San Diego area. One type of hash ends at a bar (where we usually have to buy our own beer/food), and the other type usually ends at a location where a keg and food are provided by the hash as part of your run fee.

- **Bar/Restaurant endings:** (Larrikins, Pub Hash, Full Moon, etc)
 - Find a bar in the general area you're thinking of hashing. Visit it on the same day of the week and at the same time of day that the hash will be there.
 - Verify that there is enough space to handle the hash. If the place is packed to the gills, then it's not a good choice for the on-in.
 - There should be food nearby. If the place itself serves food, that's even better, but not required.
 - The overall atmosphere of the bar should be appropriate for the hash
 - A busy sports bar on a Monday night during football season, probably isn't a good fit for a Larrikins ending.
 - A bar that has Karaoke or a live band at the same time the hash would be there, probably won't be conducive to circle.
 - Loud music by itself, in the case of a jukebox/radio, may be okay. Sometimes bartenders are willing to turn it down or off. Check to see if they're willing to do that for us.
 - Keep in mind that we sing nasty songs so you may want to gauge the crowd.
 - There should be enough staff! If hashers have to wait 30 minutes to get a beer, that's a problem (seriously, this has happened before). Talk to the bartender find out who the manager is and see if s/he will staff up for the event. Just to be safe, get the manager's name and number and call her two days before and remind her.
 - Negotiate drink specials. This can happen in the same conversation as the staffing talk. Bars are often willing to offer special deals to large groups of serious drinkers. I suggest approaching it something like *“My running group is having an event and we're thinking about coming to this bar. There will be about 50 people (or however many are expected for that hash) who spend a lot of money on drinks. Can you extend happy hour prices for us, or can you offer any specials?”*

- **Outdoor or Private Endings (SDH3, North County, Humpin, etc)**
 - These hashes end at a public place or private residence. Since alcohol will be consumed, it would be best if the on-in is a place where we can legally drink
 - A small number of parks still allow public consumption.
 - Private property is another option. This could be someone's house, or place of business, as long as we have a right to be there.
 - Another option is to find a place that while technically not legal, it's remote enough that we won't be hassled by the cops. Before you do this it's a good idea to get in contact with the beermeister and ask him/her if they are willing to tap the keg in that location.
 - If the hash includes food and/or snacks, find out who is responsible for cooking. There may be a designated person who brings the food or it may be another thing that the hares are responsible for.

STEP 5: The Start

Find a place to START your hash. The important things to keep in mind are that the start should be somewhere with adequate (legal) parking and with enough room for the hash to gather safely.

The relationship between your start location and your On-In determines the type of run. The following are some of the various Start/On-In combinations:

- Most common:
 - A-A: The start location is at the same place as the on-in. This is the easiest type of trail.
 - A-A₁ (or A-A prime): The ending is nearby, but not exactly at the start. More than a block or two and it doesn't really qualify.
 - A-B: The start isn't near the ending. If you do an A-B run, you must provide for a “B-Van” for people to put their stuff in, which the hares are responsible for taking to the ending. Don't assume there will be a B-Van for you. This is more work than an A-A run.
- Less common (some might even say less desirable):
 - A-A Drive to B: The trail starts and ends in the same location, but the On-In is not nearby and people will need to drive there from the start. You don't see these very often because it's kind of a hassle for the pack and you tend to lose a few people because once they get in their car, they may decide to just drive home.
 - A-Z: The ending isn't even remotely close to the start. I REALLY don't encourage this type of trail because the hares are responsible not only for a B-van, but for getting everyone back to the start, and may spend the entire night driving back and forth, which isn't fun.

STEP 6: Promoting Your Trail (Demonstration)

You're going to put a lot of time, energy, and creativity into your trail. Don't waste it on a small pack. Promote your trail and get people excited about it. .

- **REQUIRED:** Post a runstart on SDH3.com. This is easy, all it requires is that you fill in the blanks. Runstarts should be posted at least a week in advance to allow people to plan for it and so as to not cause your Hare Raiser to have a heart attack.
 - It's okay to post the initial runstart before you know all of the other details. Describe as much as you know but if you think you're going to add to it later, be sure to make a note telling people to check back in a couple of days (not the day of) for more details.
 - Be sure to mention any details that could encourage attendance. Is there a theme involved, is there something particularly amazing about the trail, special drink checks, or is it a holiday, birthday, etc? If so, let people know because it will encourage attendance.
 - Warnings/Important information: Be sure to let people know things like, is the trail dog friendly, do people need to bring flashlights, should they bring a change of shoes?
- **OPTIONAL:** Promote your trail on Facebook by creating a Facebook event invitation. IMHO, these can really help attendance. I've found that when people see that their friends are going, they tend to “pile on” too. This is strictly my personal opinion, and some people don't like to do it, but I think it helps to produce a good turnout. It doesn't replace the start posting though because not everyone is on Facebook.
- **OPTIONAL:** Go to other hashes and promote your trail during announcements

STEP 7: Google Maps is Your Friend (Demonstration)

Use Google Maps in the “satellite view” setting to see the big picture of the area prior to scouting on foot. This will not only save you some time, but it can help you find interesting features/obstacles to incorporate into your trail.

Google Maps can also give you an accurate indication of the length of your trail, thus preventing you from accidentally laying a 10+ mile trail, which can anger the pack, mess with down-downs, and cause the hares to have to go look for lost hashers. Remember, the pack can hold a grudge.

- From the Start, use the line tool to map out your potential trail.
- Include the locations of checks, beerchecks, backchecks, cars, etc.
- If you're splitting up trail, indicate who is doing which sections. Keeping in mind that one of the hares at either end of the section, needs to be responsible for connecting the parts together.
- Turkey/Eagle splits. Many, or maybe most, hashers feel that if you lay a trail that is much more than four miles long, you should have to offer a Turkey/Eagle split. Eagle trails are usually longer, but it could also be a matter of difficulty. (climbing fences for example)

STEP 8: Boots on the Ground

Once you have scouted your potential trail online, it's time to get out there and scout in person. Google maps, by itself is NOT enough. Trails that appear to be super easy, may now be overgrown and impassable. Also, it doesn't take into account elevation changes.

- Walk the trail with the co-hares who will be responsible for laying trail. Sometimes they will see something you miss. “Ooh, look over there, wouldn't it be fun to run them up/through/around that?” Walking instead of running the first time gives you more time to really note any obstacles that you may not notice at a running pace.
 - Identify any challenges that you couldn't see online. Take note of any fences, barbed wire, angry dogs, nosy neighbors, private property, flooded river beds, or other obstacles.
 - Scout the trail at approximately the same time of day as the hash will be going through. Automatic sprinklers may come on right behind you and wipe out your trail.
- After your initial scouting excursion, go back to your map and make any necessary adjustments.
- Run the adjusted trail to time it. For MOST hashes, aim to have the pack in within 60-90 minutes from the time the pack is away.

STEP 9: Beerchecks

Some people think that beerchecks are optional. Do you know what Shoeless calls a hash without a beercheck? A RUN. If you're not going to have a beercheck, then mention that in your runstart so I don't waste my time driving out to bumblefuck. Ignore this at your own risk. Nobody can make you have a beercheck, but people will remember and *there is no upside to being known as the hare who doesn't provide beerchecks*.

- Don't stash the beer right in the middle of poison oak, traffic, or other dangerous place.
- Don't put the beer someplace where it can easily be seen by mortals, who will simply take it.
- Have some water at the beercheck too, especially on hot days.
- If one of the hares is hosting the beercheck make sure it's someplace safe.

STEP 10: Your “Go Plan” AKA Getting All Your Ducks in a Row

Plan out your schedule for the day of the event. Make sure you know who is bringing the beer, ice, coolers, rope, flour, chalk, etc. Working backwards from the start time, plan on how early your co-hares need to meet before the trail.

- Create a time line. Include details such as:
 - Do any vehicles or beerchecks need to be pre-placed?
 - Do any sections need to be pre-layed? (more on that later)
 - Who is bringing the beer, flour, ice, etc?
- EXAMPLE: I'm haring with Oh Shit What's That, Rabbit Hole, and Fingerbang an Orangutan. We're haring for SDH3 on a Friday night and it's a simple 4 mile trail with no splits.
 - Hares are supposed to be away at 6:30. The beercheck is in the middle of some obnoxiously long tunnel, so we decide to stash it in advance. I'm picking up the flour, beer, and ice, and Fingerbang is bringing a cooler. So we decide to meet an hour earlier at the start. This gives us time to stash the beercheck, and still make it in time.
 - So my personal go plan is to leave my house at 4:30, so I can buy the supplies, get to the start by 5:30, stash the beer at the beercheck, leave Fingerbang's car nearby, and make it to the run start on time.
 - When the hares are away, Oh Shit and I peel off and lay the second half of trail backwards to the drink check, while Rabbit and Fingerbang lay the first half of the trail. This allows us all to enjoy the drink check with the pack. After the pack is away, we haul the cooler back to Fingerbang's car and drive to the On-In.

STEP 11 Hare Lies:

At the start, before the hares are away, it's time for Hare Lies. Traditionally, this is a mix of true and false information. It's a good time to give any last minute details that weren't posted on the run start or to fuck with everyone's heads. Generally this is expected and taken in stride, but there are some things that are more acceptable lies than others.

- Don't lie about matters of safety. If there are rabid dogs, rusty barbed wire fences, Poison Oak, angry gun toting property owners, etc, people deserve to know.
- Don't lie about whether it is stroller or dog friendly.
- Don't lie about beerchecks (more of a personal pet peeve)
- If the trail is 8 miles long, don't tell people that it is only 4 miles. The hares are responsible for finding any hashers who don't make it in from trail.

STEP 12 Laying Trail:

The most important part of haring is the actual laying of trail. Consequently, you could have the best, most exciting, all virgin, trail to end all trails, with 20 drink checks... but if you fuck up the trail, it's all for nothing. Bring MORE flour than you think you will need. There is no such thing as too much flour or a trail that is too well marked. There is a HUGE difference between a tricky trail and a poorly marked trail. Even experienced hashers have fucked this up. Don't be that hare.

- I recommend a 10lb bag of flour for a four mile trail. For every additional two miles, add another 5lbs. Also, don't forget chalk for checks and arrows on sidewalks and biodegradable toilet paper for areas of shiggy.
- There are many schools of thought about how often you should drop flour or how far apart the marks should be. Some people say, every 100 feet, or every 50 feet, or every 20th stride while you're running. MY suggestion, is that the next puff (or two) of flour should be easily visible from the previous puff of flour.
 - TIP: Try running in pairs in single file. The person in front can be responsible for laying most of the flour, and the next person can follow behind and fill in the gaps.
- Turns and crossings at major intersections should be marked with arrows. A good rule of thumb for crossings is that if you're crossing a street with a yellow stripe dividing it, it deserves an arrow. In any case, you can never mark the trail TOO well.
- Try to avoid Poison Oak. If there is P.O. nearby, mark it so that hashers can avoid it.
- Marks: Different hashes sometimes have different ways of marking trail. Make sure that you know the specific marks for the hash you're haring for. If you're not sure, ask the hare raiser. (SEE ATTACHED)
- Turkey/Eagle trails. Don't forget to mark the turkey/eagle split AND the merge. This is especially important if the hares are splitting up sections of trail. When this gets messed up you sometimes end up with turkeys running the eagle loop backwards or vice versa.
- To pre-lay or not to pre-lay... that is the question.
 - Some hashes require that the hares lay the trail live or else they will get severely punished. Other hashes pre-lay as a rule. The rest of the local hashes seem to prefer that most or all of the trail is live, but don't get bent out of shape if parts are pre-layed. Again, check with the hare raiser, if you're not sure.
 - I like a live trail, but sometimes it's unavoidable. Some hares/co-hares are not as fast as others and to avoid being snared 10 times on trail, they pre-lay. Also, sometimes the logistics of the trail demand it.
- Snare Prevention Techniques.
 - Obviously, there is the pre-laying option. One variation of this is to go through your trail in advance and simply pre-lay all the checks/splits/merges/etc. That way, when you are running the trail live, all you have to do is throw flour on the ground.
 - Good checks can significantly slow down the FRBs. Be sure to mix it up a bit so it's not always a right or left turn, but sometimes straight ahead.
 - If you really want to be a dick, when you lay the check, pre-mark it in the WRONG DIRECTION.
 - Put the Eagle loop at the very beginning of trail. That way the faster people are behind the slower people. This is especially fun to do on trails where it is difficult for them to pass.
- AFTER THE TRAIL: If the trail isn't A-A, the hares need to go back to the start and draw a map to the On-In location.