**TRAIL GUIDELINES**

**Updated 3-8-2020**

The following guidelines will help make training and racing safe and enjoyable for you and for others! Please read the entire guidelines before attending your first UltraLadies training run.

1. Before you attend the first run of the new season, please go to [ULTRA SIGNUP](http://ultrasignup.com/register.aspx?eid=6526) and register to run with the Ultra Ladies.

2. Go to the Facebook Group ULTRA LADIES 2020 and "Join This Group". Once your membership is approved, you will be given access to the private Ultra Ladies Facebook Group.

3. The Ultra Ladies is primarly a women's training group however we welcome Ultra Ladies' Men who are SOs of Ladies in our group. Anyone in marathon condition can train with the Ultra Ladies. We encourage newbies join in the spring of each year; our training mileage starts low and follows a build-up to the end of the season. If you have a one-year base of steady training (without lapses due to injury) or have completed a recent marathon injury-free, you are ready to train with the Ultra Ladies. Once you have completed your first 50K, you are welcome to join the next Training Program to train for your 50-Mile Ultra Marathon.

4. The UltraLadies meets for long runs bi-weekly on Saturday mornings during your scheduled program. The runs are held at various trail heads in the Santa Monica Mountains, near Los Angeles. The long runs are usually out-and-back for time and the length of each run will increase by 20 or 30 minutes each time we meet. The trail is marked with arrows and there will always be a lead runner as well as mentors scattered throughout the course to interact with you and help you along. Since we all turn-around at the same predetermined time, we will all arrive back at the parking area together to share some cool tailgate refreshments together. FYI, the UltraLadies runs will happen, rain-or-shine.

5. The Ultra Ladies meets for a one-hour tempo run monthly on Saturday morning in Van Nuys.

5. All Ultra Ladies runs will start on time. Every scheduled run will have a meeting time and a run time. Please arrive early, shoes tied, bottles filled, ready start at the run time. If you arrive at the run start time, you are already late. If you arrive after the group has departed, please sign yourself in and follow the arrows.

6. There will be a sign-in sheet on a clipboard at the beginning of each run. The sign-in sheet will be located on the windshield of the group leader's car. Always write down your vehicle license plate number and cell phone number so we have a way to check on who may still be out on the trail. Remember to check off your name when you return from the run; failure to do so may result in you incurring search and rescue costs.

7. These are training runs, not races. The runs are social (leave your competitive ego at home). Nobody cares who gets back to the cars first. Don't be intimidated... the average training pace is on long runs 4-5 mph. Be prepared to deal with altitude, uneven footing, and possible encounters with wildlife. Most important is to have fun because while most are just rolling out of bed, you are on top of a mountain!

8. Although we mark arrows on the trail, the arrows cannot be guaranteed and there is always a possibility of getting lost. Hikers sometimes tamper with the arrows. Other running clubs often mark their own arrows that may be mistaken for ours. Fatigue may cause you to miss an arrow. Always pay attention to your surroundings on the trail. Search for landmarks to help you identify directions coming AND going. If you think you are lost, always backtrack to the last arrow and continue from there. Bottom line; you are responsible for finding your own way so always pay attention to your surroundings.

9. Everyone runs for 'time on your feet'. If is not necessary to complete the maximum mileage posted. The slowest runners should plan to maintain a pace of 4-mph overall to complete the recommended distance. A turn-around time will be established for each run and everyone should expect to turn around at the cut-off time and head back to the cars. This means that although the run is tagged at xx number of miles, some of you may actually run fewer miles but will still complete enough 'time on your feet' to finish a 50K race.

10. If you decide to turn back early, always tell another runner, so someone knows where you are. Remember to check off your name on the sign-in sheet when you return to your car. See above for consequences of this!

11. Some of the benefits of mountain trail running are increased fitness and confidence building, enjoying nature up close and personal, gaining attitude adjustments, solving world problems and freedom to be a kid again!

12. You will be running in wilderness. Be prepared to encounter heat, altitude, streams, rocks, rattlesnakes, poison oak, and possibly mountain lions. Falls are a distinct probability. These are all good reasons to run with a group. In the event that you require rescue from the trail, there may be delays due to the remoteness of the location. Please remember you are always participating at your own risk.

13. Do not wear earbuds. You will not hear rattlesnake warnings, approaching mountain bikes, rattlesnakes or lost runners calling in distress.

14. There are no toilets on the trails. It is acceptable to pee by the side of the trail but carry out your tissue! To poop, go off-trail, dig a small hole with the heel of your shoe, and then bury the remains. Do not bury soiled tissue. Pack it out in a baggie. If you leave the trail to go in the bushes, always leave your water pack on the trail as a visible marker of where you left trail; this will help if we need to come to look for you!

15. At stream crossings avoid grabbing tree branches. Poison oak usually grows near water. Upon exposure, immediately rinse your skin with plain water. Rinse; don't rub. At home, rinse off under the garden hose (while fully dressed/shoes on) then launder.

16. Please move at your own pace. Ultra pace means to walk all the up hills and run all the down hills and as much of the flats as possible. You might be a fast runner or you might be a slow runner! People are usually fast on the way out and slow on the way back. Please go your own pace, following the arrows. You are not expected to keep up. If you do feel like running the up hills, save it for the return trip. As most of our runs will be out-and-back, you are encouraged to go as slow as you need to go on the way out; that will help insure that you can come back a little faster.

17. Which do you think is more advantageous for finishing a 50K: Running 26-miles in 4h or running 24-miles in 6h? The runner who spends more time on her feet actually has an advantage over the faster runner when it comes to distance running. On race day, the slower runner will have an easier time adding the extra 7-miles while the faster runner may struggle more to complete those last 5-miles.

18. What to bring on your training run:

* You are expected to carry water/fluid; at least 10oz per hour for every hour on trail. Please do not skimp on fluid... others can't carry enough to share with you. In hot weather, it is a good idea to freeze one bottle the night before...it'll melt as you run and keep you cool! Please carry large 20oz bottles; **do not show up with those little tiny water bottles!!!**
* Gels; snack food; PB&J sandwiches; trail mix; dried fruit; blister tape; band-aids; tissue; baggie; ginger; candy; trash baggie.
* Sodium; potassium, Advil; Tylenol; Tums; Imodium.
* Hat, visor, bandana, sun sleeves, sun block; shoe gaiters; cell phone.
* Carry a plastic zip bag with tissue and baby wipes for doing your business on the trail. Always carry out soiled tissue.
* Trail-running shoes (or running shoes with a wide heel base and knobby tread on the soles). Ultra runners usually buy their trail shoes one full size larger than their road shoes.
* Folding chair and small cooler w/drinks for after the run. We usually bring drinks to each run but you're welcome to bring what you like to drink.

19. Know the Right-of-Way Rule:

* Horses always have the right-of-way
* Foot traffic yields to horses
* Mountain bikes yield to foot traffic and horses

20. DISCLAIMER: You are RUNNING AT YOUR OWN RISK! The Ultra Ladies training runs are unsupported. No aid is provided; course markings are minimal and can not be guaranteed to be accurate; you assume responsibility for your own safety, navigation, hydration and support during the training runs and if necessary, you assume financial responsibility for rescue and/or removal from the training course, including but not limited to air evacuation.