

Parent Survival Guide to a Competition

This document includes all you need to know about an FRC competition to make it out in one piece, maybe.

Safety Glasses:

- Safety glasses are required to enter the pits, they are usually provided by the team for the students, but if you want to go to the pits to see the super cool robots, you'll need them
- Also, teens are forgetful, it is almost guaranteed that your child will lose their safety glasses and may need yours

Money:

- Some concessions at competitions may require only cash or only card, so make sure to carry both because, while food is usually provided by the team, they usually don't account for adults and extra hungry kids
- Coffee is sometimes available for purchase at the concessions, but you may want to supply your own seeing as concessions coffee is black as night and comes in styrofoam

Lunch:

- Food is normally provided by the team via parent sign-ups (this includes snacks and water)
- There is normally a designated area provided by the venue for lunch

Patience:

- The competitions can be very loud and boring at times, so make sure to bring all of the patience you have and more
- Also, children are very annoying, as we're sure you already know

Seating:

- Bleachers are not comfortable, and if you are a human at all you might want something else to sit on
- Also, the earlier you get to the competition the more likely you are to get better seats
- Most people prefer higher-up seats because they provide a better view of the playing field

Earplugs:

- People are loud, the music is loud, robots are loud, and no further explanation is needed

Boredom:

- There are gaps in between matches, especially during the last day of competition, or if you don't like robots, you might be bored for the whole thing
- Bring a book, download a show, and be prepared to sit there

Items:

- You know how when your child was younger you were essentially the pack mule for all the diapers and supplies?
- Competitions may bring you back to that time if your child did not bring a bag
- They will acquire pins and other swag from the teams there and might ask you to carry things
- Coats and items in general are usually stored at the team's designated lunch area, or in an area in the stands that is occupied by the team (normally a parent/member is watching these items)

Clothing:

- Dress in layers the competition may be too cold...or too hot, it depends on the location
- Wearing close toed shoes is a good idea in general in case a robot falls on your toes

Long Days:

- Be prepared for very long days, coffee is always a gift
- The last match normally ends at 6:00 PM on Day 1, Day 2 ends around the same time

Long Drives:

- Competitions can sometimes be placed very far away from your place of residence, so having a comfortable seat in your car is essential
- Try to get to competitions at least fifteen minutes before scheduled (the earlier you get there, the better the parking)

What to Expect on Day 0:

- This is when most teams go to set up their pits in the evening before Day 1
- Usually, only the pit crew goes (normally a few people from build, drive team, and a programmer, although there may be more if needed)
- Sometimes scouters may go to start the pit scouting as well

What to Expect on Day 1:

- The team will most likely provide you with what times events are and when you need to be there (both Day 1 and Day 2)
- The day will kick off with opening ceremonies
- This is a full day of competing (both Day 1 and Day 2)
- Normally the whole team goes to support and help with scouting (both Day 1 and Day 2)
- This is when qualifying matches start

What to Expect on Day 2:

- The morning is used to finish up qualifying matches
- After the rankings are finalized, the final matches start
- There are usually a lot of gaps in between these matches
- After finals there is a break and then awards, and then you get to go home
- Help for packing up items is wonderful because the quicker you pack up the quicker you get to go home

The Blue Alliance:

- This is an app that can be found on both Apple App Store and Google Play
- It tracks scores and what teams are in what matches, and is overall a good resource for keeping up with the competition
- And no, there is not a Red Alliance app

Team Spirit:

- Please bring your best team spirit to the competition, like any sporting event, it's more fun when everyone is having fun
- Gracious professionalism is a key part of FIRST Robotics, so please be a great example for everyone
- And please, no cowbells (or noisemakers in general)

Vocabulary You Might Just Want To Know:

- Pits: place where the robots and team supplies are held
- Alliance: group of three robots that are competing together to win a match; two alliances to a match
 - Alliance colors are red and blue, they are distinguishable by the bumpers on the robots
- Scouting:
 - Pit scouting is when members of the scouting team go around the pits to analyze other teams' robots
 - Match scouting is when a robot is watched in a match to see what its strengths and weaknesses are

If you have any other suggestions for this survival guide, please contact us at our website, rockemsockemrobotics.com or email us at team453.firstrobotics@gmail.com

