

Beginners' Guide to F1 (4:41)

Formula One is the most exciting sport on the planet, the pinnacle of speed, skill and glamor contested by the most skilled drivers and the world's top manufacturers, creating the most technologically advanced cars in history. F1 travels to the world's greatest and most glamorous circuits, from historic classics to exciting street circuits like the Miami Grand Prix. In all insane speeds, acceleration supercars can only dream of top speed of 370 kilometers per hour and G-forces that only fighter pilots can relate to. F1 is all about pushing the limits of speed, science and nerves. To get you up to speed, here's the complete lowdown on Formula One.

It might seem like an individual pursuit but F1 is a team sport. Currently, ten teams of two drivers contest each race weekend referred to as the Grand Prix. Behind the scenes, each driver is supported by a crew of mechanics, engineers and strategists to squeeze every bit of performance out of the car. Race weekends start with practice to fine-tune setups before a three-part knockout qualifying session against the clock to determine the order of the drivers' lineup on the starting grid. The fastest qualifier starts at the front in pole position. Certain weekends include (an) F1 Sprint event. It gives the fans an extra race between qualifying and the main Grand Prix, run at a third of the full race distance. This adds a whole new layer of jeopardy, with the Sprint result not only setting the starting order but also offering points to top eight finishers.

On race day, the five lights come on one by one before going out to start the race. Drivers muscle their cars around the track as fast as possible to reach the checkered flag at the finish line first after either a distance of 305 kilometers and a time limit of two hours, at straight line speeds of 370 kilometers per hour withstanding cornering forces of 5G. Drivers can corner so fast they experience forces similar to those felt in a space shuttle launch. Speed is one thing, but drivers also need to overtake the game position. F1 races are long, and a small break in concentration could present the opportunity to pass or get within the driver's slipstream, an area of disturbed air behind a car that allows a following car to go faster, move alongside and pass. This creates incredible battles as drivers jostle to stay ahead for the finish.

All drivers have to stop at their garages known as their pit box at least once for a change of tyres. This task, called a pit stop, can be completed by the best teams in two seconds flat. There's different grades of tyres that either last longer or drive faster. The teams must decide which sets will work best for their race strategy. This creates a thrilling blend of on-track battles and pit stop strategy to keep fans guessing right to the final laps.

When the checkered flag falls, the top three finishers are presented trophies on F1's tiered podium above a crowd of fans before the sport's iconic celebration ceremony. A Grand Prix win is worth 25 points and fewer on a sliding scale for finishers down to tenth. Drivers don't get prize money but teams do based on their final championship points. Even just one place improvement in a year can mean a massive financial injection to help improve car performance further. At the end of the year, trophies are given to the driver and team with the most points from all races, marked with their name alongside every winner in Formula One history.

Since its birth in 1950, Formula One has always been the pinnacle of motorsport and having developed the world's most efficient hybrid engine soon to be powered by one hundred percent sustainable fuels. F1 is at the forefront of tomorrow's motoring technology. On track it's produced larger than life legends and cult heroes, rivalries that have shaped decades. It never stops changing and improving all in search of an extra fraction of a second. There really is nothing like it.