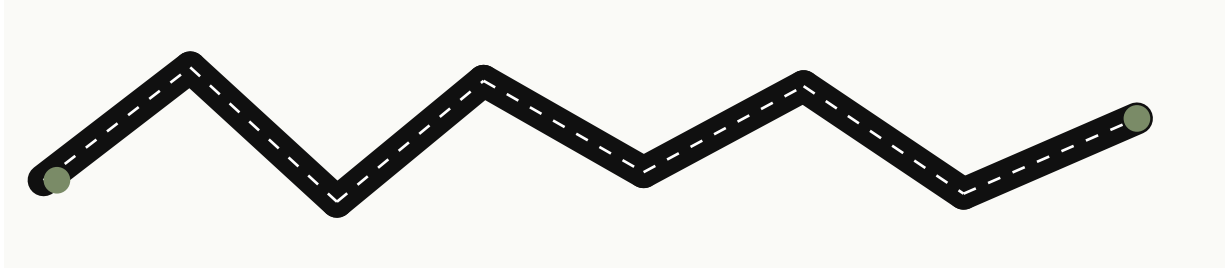


## TEJ DRIVES ROAD DOC

# Tail of the Dragon Plan

A practical printable guide for planning, prepping, and driving the Dragon without turning the day into chaos.



## What this is

A road-first planning guide for anyone heading to Tail of the Dragon: route orientation, pre-drive checks, gear list, safety mindset, and a simple drive-day plan. It is not a speed guide, race plan, or guarantee of road conditions.

### Best for

First-timers, Porsche drivers, weekend road-trip planners, and anyone who wants a cleaner plan before arriving.

### Core road fact

Tail of the Dragon is the well-known 11-mile stretch of US 129 with 318 curves near Deals Gap on the NC/TN line.

### Use it for

Printing, packing, route planning, trailer/unload thinking, pre-drive checks, and keeping the day simple.

### Drive posture

Smooth, patient, controlled. Let faster traffic pass. Do not cross the centerline. Save ego for the parking lot.

Version 1.0 | Built by Tej Drives | [tejdrives.com](http://tejdrives.com)

# Quick Overview

Tail of the Dragon is short, intense, and easy to underestimate. The road is famous because it stacks curve after curve with very little room to mentally reset. A good trip is not about attacking it blind. It is about arriving prepared, driving within your limits, and leaving with the car and people intact.

## Simple rule

Treat the first pass as a sighting lap. Learn the road, surface, traffic, pull-offs, and your own comfort level before pushing any pace.

<p><b>Road type</b></p> <p>Two-lane mountain road. Tight curves, elevation change, motorcycles, sports cars, photographers, and mixed driver skill.</p>	<p><b>Common start point</b></p> <p>Deals Gap area / US 129. Many drivers use the Deals Gap stop as an anchor point before or after the run.</p>
<p><b>Trip risk</b></p> <p>The danger is not just speed. It is target fixation, centerline crossing, cold tires, fatigue, wet leaves, and traffic surprises.</p>	<p><b>Best mindset</b></p> <p>Calm hands, clean line, no hero moves, no passing games, and no filming choices that distract from driving.</p>

## The Tej Drives approach

<input type="checkbox"/> Get there early enough to avoid rushing.	<input type="checkbox"/> Inspect the car before the run.
<input type="checkbox"/> Drive the first pass at learning pace.	<input type="checkbox"/> Use pull-offs to reset and let faster traffic go.
<input type="checkbox"/> Keep cameras mounted before moving.	<input type="checkbox"/> Stop if the road, weather, or traffic feels off.
<input type="checkbox"/> Do a post-drive walkaround.	<input type="checkbox"/> Leave with usable memories, not a repair bill.

# Route Orientation

Use this page to understand the flow before building your exact navigation route. Always confirm live directions, closures, weather, and traffic before leaving.

<b>Primary road</b>	US 129, commonly known as Tail of the Dragon near Deals Gap.
<b>Known distance</b>	About 11 miles for the famous Dragon section.
<b>Known curve count</b>	318 curves is the widely used reference number for the route.
<b>Anchor area</b>	Deals Gap / NC-TN state line area. Good mental anchor before or after the run.
<b>Nearby planning areas</b>	Robbinsville, Fontana, Maryville/Alcoa, and surrounding Smoky Mountain routes depending on where you stay.

## Recommended first-timer flow

<input type="checkbox"/> Arrive with fuel already sorted.	<input type="checkbox"/> Stop before the run; check tires, cameras, and loose items.
<input type="checkbox"/> Do one calm pass to learn the road.	<input type="checkbox"/> Pull off safely if traffic builds behind you.
<input type="checkbox"/> Do not chase locals or bikes.	<input type="checkbox"/> Turn around only where it is legal and safe.
<input type="checkbox"/> After the run, park and let brakes/tires cool.	<input type="checkbox"/> Take notes while the road is fresh in your mind.

### Do not plan this like a normal scenic road

The road gives you very little dead space. That makes fatigue and distraction matter more. If you are filming, mount cameras before you move and leave them alone during the drive.

# Route Plan Template

Use this to build your own clean route instead of copying someone else's exact trip. The goal is to force the right waypoints, separate towing from driving, and remove guesswork before you leave.

## How to use this page

Fill in each stop in the order you want your GPS to follow. Do not rely on fastest-route logic alone. Mountain roads, trailers, traffic, and wrong turns can change the whole day.

## Main route

<b>Trip name</b>	-----
<b>Start point</b>	-----
<b>Base / lodging</b>	-----
<b>Primary road</b>	-----
<b>Endpoint / turnaround</b>	-----
<b>Return point</b>	-----
<b>Roads to avoid</b>	-----
<b>Hard rule</b>	Example: no trailer on tight technical roads / no rushing / no night run.

## GPS stops - enter in order

#	Stop / landmark	Search in Maps	Why it matters
1	-----	-----	-----
2	-----	-----	-----
3	-----	-----	-----
4	-----	-----	-----
5	-----	-----	-----
6	-----	-----	-----

# Tow Route Builder

Use this if you are trailering the car near the Dragon or any technical mountain road. The tow route and the fun route should be planned separately.

## Tow rule

If a road is famous because it is tight, technical, crowded, or full of switchbacks, do not assume it is trailer-friendly. Build the tow route around boring, safer roads first.

## Tow route plan

<b>Tow start</b>	-----
<b>Safe approach waypoint</b>	-----
<b>Lodging / unload area</b>	-----
<b>Roads to avoid</b>	-----
<b>Trailer speed target</b>	-----
<b>Fuel / food stop</b>	-----
<b>Unload location</b>	-----
<b>Backup parking</b>	-----

## Tow checklist

<input type="checkbox"/> Hitch locked	<input type="checkbox"/> Lights working	<input type="checkbox"/> Chains crossed
<input type="checkbox"/> Straps secured	<input type="checkbox"/> Boards/ramps stored	<input type="checkbox"/> Tire pressures checked
<input type="checkbox"/> Route forced with waypoints	<input type="checkbox"/> Technical road avoided	<input type="checkbox"/> Fuel before mountain stretch
<input type="checkbox"/> Speed kept controlled	<input type="checkbox"/> Engine braking used downhill	<input type="checkbox"/> Straps rechecked after short drive

## GPS sanity check

Before moving, zoom into the route and verify the actual roads. If the route sneaks you onto the road you were trying to avoid, cancel it and add a safer waypoint.

# Dragon Run Builder

This turns the drive itself into a simple sequence: base, pre-run stop, Dragon pass, reset point, return. Keep it boring on paper so the road can be the fun part.

## Example structure

<b>Base</b>	Your lodging, parking area, or meet-up point.
<b>Pre-run stop</b>	Fuel, tire check, camera setup, restroom, water, and mental reset.
<b>Dragon entry</b>	The road/start area you will use for the first pass.
<b>Endpoint</b>	Safe parking/rest area after the first pass.
<b>Return run</b>	Same road back or a planned alternate route.
<b>After run</b>	Cool down, check car, review footage, decide if you are done.

## Fill your run plan

<b>Base</b>	-----
<b>Pre-run stop</b>	-----
<b>First pass direction</b>	-----
<b>Endpoint / rest stop</b>	-----
<b>Return direction</b>	-----
<b>Photo stop</b>	-----
<b>Brake/cooldown stop</b>	-----
<b>Done-by time</b>	-----

### First pass mindset

The first run should be a learning pass. Stay in your lane, let the car warm up, learn the road, and let faster traffic go.

# Route Notes + Content Plan

Good planning also helps the story. Use this page to capture the route logic, not just random clips.

<p><b>Route proof</b></p> <p>Shoot the map screen before leaving, the road sign or landmark at the start, and the car at the endpoint.</p>	<p><b>Tow story</b></p> <p>If trailering, show the boring logistics: hitch check, strap recheck, boards, and why the tow route avoids technical roads.</p>
<p><b>Drive story</b></p> <p>Show the shift from planning to driving: pre-run checks, calm first pass, stop/reset, then post-run thoughts.</p>	<p><b>Useful takeaway</b></p> <p>End with one thing a future driver can use: best timing, what to avoid, what to bring, or how to plan the route.</p>

## Notes worksheet

<b>Why this route</b>	-----
<b>What to avoid</b>	-----
<b>Best stop</b>	-----
<b>Best photo angle</b>	-----
<b>What surprised me</b>	-----
<b>Advice for next driver</b>	-----

## Content checklist

<input type="checkbox"/> Route/map shot	<input type="checkbox"/> Leaving base
<input type="checkbox"/> Fuel/pre-run stop	<input type="checkbox"/> Road sign/landmark
<input type="checkbox"/> Mounted driving footage	<input type="checkbox"/> Endpoint parked shots
<input type="checkbox"/> Car check/cooldown	<input type="checkbox"/> Return run clip
<input type="checkbox"/> Post-drive thoughts	<input type="checkbox"/> One useful planning lesson

# Pre-Drive Vehicle Checklist

Run this before leaving home and again before the first Dragon pass.

## Tires

<input type="checkbox"/> Cold tire pressure checked	<input type="checkbox"/> No visible sidewall damage
<input type="checkbox"/> Tread looks even	<input type="checkbox"/> Lug bolts/nuts checked
<input type="checkbox"/> No rubbing or loose liner noise	

## Brakes

<input type="checkbox"/> Pedal feels firm	<input type="checkbox"/> Pads have usable life
<input type="checkbox"/> No grinding, vibration, or pull	<input type="checkbox"/> Brake fluid level checked
<input type="checkbox"/> No obvious leaks near calipers	

## Fluids

<input type="checkbox"/> Oil level checked	<input type="checkbox"/> Coolant level checked
<input type="checkbox"/> Washer fluid filled	<input type="checkbox"/> No fresh leaks under car
<input type="checkbox"/> Fuel plan handled before the run	

## Cabin

<input type="checkbox"/> Loose items removed	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone mount secure
<input type="checkbox"/> Camera mounts secure	<input type="checkbox"/> Water/snacks packed
<input type="checkbox"/> Route loaded before driving	

## Exterior

<input type="checkbox"/> Lights working	<input type="checkbox"/> Windshield clean
<input type="checkbox"/> Wipers OK	<input type="checkbox"/> Front lip/splitter secure
<input type="checkbox"/> License/registration/insurance present	

## Driver

<input type="checkbox"/> Rested enough to drive	<input type="checkbox"/> No rushing mindset
<input type="checkbox"/> Weather checked	<input type="checkbox"/> Passenger expectations set
<input type="checkbox"/> Pull-off plan understood	

# What to Bring

Keep the kit useful but not overbuilt. The goal is to solve small problems without carrying the whole garage.

## Basic road kit

<input type="checkbox"/> Tire pressure gauge	<input type="checkbox"/> Portable inflator	<input type="checkbox"/> Jump pack
<input type="checkbox"/> Microfiber towels	<input type="checkbox"/> Glass cleaner	<input type="checkbox"/> Painter tape or detail spray
<input type="checkbox"/> Basic socket/bit set	<input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight/headlamp	<input type="checkbox"/> Work gloves
<input type="checkbox"/> Zip ties	<input type="checkbox"/> Duct tape	<input type="checkbox"/> Small towel/rag
<input type="checkbox"/> OBD scanner if available	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone charger	<input type="checkbox"/> Battery bank
<input type="checkbox"/> Water	<input type="checkbox"/> Snacks	<input type="checkbox"/> First-aid basics

## Optional towing / trailer kit

<input type="checkbox"/> Wheel straps	<input type="checkbox"/> Extra tie-down strap	<input type="checkbox"/> Ramp boards
<input type="checkbox"/> Gloves	<input type="checkbox"/> Trailer lock	<input type="checkbox"/> Spare board blocks
<input type="checkbox"/> Torque wrench if available	<input type="checkbox"/> Trailer light adapter	<input type="checkbox"/> Tire chocks
<input type="checkbox"/> Small jack if appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/> Ratchet strap handle check	<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency triangles

### Packing rule

If the item will distract you, rattle around, or make the cabin messy, secure it or leave it. Loose items become noise, projectiles, and mental clutter on tight roads.

# Drive-Day Plan

Fill this out before the trip. A simple written plan reduces last-minute guessing.

<b>Date / day</b>	-----
<b>Start location</b>	-----
<b>First fuel stop</b>	-----
<b>Pre-drive stop</b>	-----
<b>First pass goal</b>	Learn the road, stay smooth, no chasing.
<b>Lunch / reset stop</b>	-----
<b>Turnaround / endpoint</b>	-----
<b>Weather note</b>	-----
<b>Photo/content stops</b>	-----
<b>Hard stop time</b>	-----

## Suggested timing logic

<p><b>Early start</b></p> <p>Less heat, less rush, usually cleaner mental pace. Still expect mixed traffic.</p>	<p><b>Midday caution</b></p> <p>More visitors, more bikes/cars, more impatience. Reset often.</p>
<p><b>Wet road rule</b></p> <p>Slow everything down. Painted lines, leaves, and shade patches can surprise you.</p>	<p><b>Second pass rule</b></p> <p>Only do another pass if you are calmer, not more excited.</p>

# Dragon Etiquette & Safety

This is the page that keeps the trip from getting stupid.

<input type="checkbox"/> Stay in your lane. Centerline crossing is the big failure point.	<input type="checkbox"/> Use pull-offs. Let faster traffic pass safely instead of proving a point.
<input type="checkbox"/> Do not stop in the road for photos.	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not pass unless it is legal, safe, and clearly marked.
<input type="checkbox"/> Watch for motorcycles using different lines and speeds.	<input type="checkbox"/> Assume blind corners hide traffic, debris, or a slow vehicle.
<input type="checkbox"/> Brake before the corner, not deep into panic.	<input type="checkbox"/> Keep both hands focused on driving; do not adjust cameras mid-run.
<input type="checkbox"/> If your passenger gets uncomfortable, slow down or stop.	<input type="checkbox"/> If you feel yourself chasing pace, pull off and reset.
<input type="checkbox"/> Respect residents, businesses, and law enforcement presence.	<input type="checkbox"/> Drive home with the same car you brought.

## Real win

A clean Dragon run is not the fastest run. It is the one where you stay composed, respect the road, and can explain exactly what you learned afterward.

# Content Notes

Capture the story without letting content ruin the drive.

<p><b>Before the road</b></p> <p>Shoot the car parked, tire check, map/route note, fuel stop, and a quick walkaround. This builds the setup.</p>	<p><b>During the drive</b></p> <p>Use pre-mounted cameras only. Interior wheel/shift shot, windshield POV, rear-facing shot, or passenger-safe angle.</p>
<p><b>After the run</b></p> <p>Record immediate thoughts: what surprised you, what you learned, what the car felt like, and what you would change.</p>	<p><b>Do not chase content</b></p> <p>No handheld filming while driving. No risky pull-offs. No speed flexing. The brand is the drive, not the drama.</p>

## Final Go / No-Go

<input type="checkbox"/> Car feels right	<input type="checkbox"/> Tires and brakes checked	<input type="checkbox"/> Weather is acceptable
<input type="checkbox"/> Driver is rested	<input type="checkbox"/> Route loaded	<input type="checkbox"/> Fuel handled
<input type="checkbox"/> Loose items removed	<input type="checkbox"/> Cameras mounted	<input type="checkbox"/> Passenger briefed
<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency contact set	<input type="checkbox"/> No warning lights	<input type="checkbox"/> No rushed mindset

## Post-drive notes

<b>Best section</b>	-----
<b>Car felt</b>	-----
<b>Change next time</b>	-----
<b>Content idea</b>	-----

Source note: Road facts cross-checked against TailoftheDragon.com and regional travel references. Always verify live route status and conditions before driving.