

Triple Trail Challenge—Forest Hill and James River Park Figure 8

Start in Forest Hill Park next to the Trail Map sign on the left side of the parking lot as you enter the park at the intersection of New Kent Road and 42nd Street. As you enter the park turn slightly to the left and park where a row of wooden posts keeps you from driving on the grass. You will see a kiosk covering maps and information about trail use. This sign is where your time starts and finishes.

These directions take you looping around the dirt trail loop counterclockwise in Forest Hill Park. You will leave the park and then go clockwise around the James River Park loop before coming back to Forest Hill Park and finishing the loop to the Trail Sign.

Note: these trails are not marked well and are very difficult to navigate. Please carry these directions or have someone that knows the trails help guide you. Night riding and running is allowed in this park, but it will make it harder to navigate. This trail loop is the most difficult both because of the up and down nature of the trail but also because of the roots, rocks and other obstacles. Yes, it is a challenge!

Trail Loop Directions

Run away from the parking lot and before you get to the woods you will see a trail go to the right and this will lead around the outside of the parking lot.

After looping around the parking lot make a sharp switch back turn on rocks to continue on the trail.

At the bottom of the hill stay straight on the main trail (a side trail does go down to the lake on the left).

Stay straight across a stone walkway on the dirt trail.

Bear right on closed, paved park road and follow detour

Go left down and then up stone stairs

Take a left staying right of the tennis courts

Take a right to rejoin the trail

Stay straight where a side trail goes off to the left. Stay on the main trail through several turns.

Go right at trail marker on dirt trail.

Stay on trail with lots of pine needles.

Go left on a paved park road

Immediately bear right to return to dirt trail.

Cross Reedy Creek on rocks and go through fence opening.

Turn right on dirt trail

Cross the drainage wall of stone masonry

After another ¼ mile cross the stone sidewalk and continue on the dirt trail.

After another ¼ mile cross a little wooden bridge and do a sharp right turn on next trail.

Climb the gradual uphill and go left at next trail just past trail marker

Stay on this trail for ½ mile until it comes out next to paved Riverside Drive.

Go left down gravel road

Turn right and go through Reedy Creek tunnel under Riverside Drive.

(You have now exited Forest Hill Park)

Go left after the tunnel on Buttermilk Trail heading west

Go straight across parking lot driveway

Stay to the right at the next trail junction.

Stay to the right at the next trail junction

Caution going down steep wooden ramp

Go left on the quarry loop trail—rejoin the main trail staying to the left.

Stay to the right going up the hill on main trail and not toward the parking lot at 42nd.

Stay to the right over roots and continue on this trail (staying on the biking route) for ¾ of a mile.

Stay right as you near Boulevard Road bridge

Go under the road bridge and take a sharp left at the trail junction

Go left on the sidewalk to cross the Boulevard Bridge across the James River

After bridge go left on dirt trail just past the end of sidewalk fencing

Take sharp left turn onto the North Bank Trail heading east

Keep going straight on gravel road

Go up wooden ramp to first landing

Go right off wooden ramp to dirt trail

Go right and stay on North Bank Trail

Stay right where stairs come from left

At split in the trail stay left for bikers (not right for hikers)

Stay straight on trail (not down wooden stairs)

Cross wooden bridge and go straight across dirt driveway

Continue straight on gravel road following wooden ramp

Stay straight after going past chain link fence

Go right across footbridge

Go left down gravel road

Bear to the right on gravel road

Cross Tredegar Street and go left on sidewalk

Stay straight on the sidewalk path over boat ramp

Turn right on access bridge to Brown's Island

Go right on Tyler Potterfield Bridge and cross the James River

Stay on paved trail next to railroad tracks

Stay to the left on wide paved trail (not sharp left narrow paved trail or not right on gravel floodwall walk)

Top of hill bear left across bridge over the railroad tracks

Go right on sidewalk at T intersection

Stay on sidewalk after fence ends

Bear to the right as sidewalk ends and head west on dirt Buttermilk Trail

Stay straight on the Buttermilk trail as it goes under the Lee Bridge

Stay straight at trail junction at the top of 22nd Street stairs

Stay heading west across flat stone walkway.

Head west on dirt Buttermilk trail (not the trail with stairs or over a bridge)

Stay straight on trail across parking lot driveway.

Stay left at split in the trail after a wooden walkway

Stay straight on main Buttermilk trail heading west

Stay right at trail junction just before Reedy creek

Turn left before wooden bridge and go into the creek bed and go left back through the tunnel under Riverside Drive

Use the far right tunnel to go back into Forest Hill Park.

After the tunnel go left across the creek and up the path to the right

Stay right along gravel road going away (south) from Riverside drive

Turn right at large concrete block and carefully cross narrow concrete bridge with no sides.

Stay straight on trail after several switchbacks you will cross a rock water bar.

Bear to your left under the trees back to the trailhead Kiosk where you started in Forest Hill Park. Yay you finished this loop!