

Home-Built Soapbox Cart CONSTRUCTION SPECIFICATIONS

1. Soapbox carts are powered by gravity only.
2. The driver must sit or lay in the cart, facing forward and control the cart using only hands and feet.
3. **Very important! Drivers must be able to get in and out of the cart easily, and steer and stop the cart in the normal position without stretching or straining.**
4. The centre of gravity, with the driver in place, should be as low as possible without violating the minimum road clearance (1.5") specification.
5. Carts must have four wheels. Minimum diameter is six inches. Wheels must have solid or inflated rubber tires.
6. Measures must be taken to prevent wheels from departing the cart when in use. Use cotter pins or other positive means to keep the wheels in place.
7. Fasteners used in the steering and brake systems must be prevented from loosening when in use by the use of lock nuts, cotter pins, wire-tying or other means.
8. Maximum overall cart length, 84".
9. Maximum cart body width, 35".
10. Maximum axle length, 35". Axles must not rotate - wheels must rotate on the axles.
11. Road clearance to any part of the cart, including fasteners, must be 1.5" minimum.
12. Minimize front and rear overhang to prevent getting hung up on the starting ramps.
13. All **basic structure** parts must be securely fastened to each other using bolts, screws or other suitable hardware. Plywood and solid wood are permitted structural materials. **The basic structure is defined as the chassis on which the driver sits and to which the axles, steering, brake mechanisms, and body parts are attached.** A body or shell may be part of the cart's basic structure.
14. Springs and shock absorbers are not permitted.

1. **Important!** Steering shall be only by means of rotation of the front axle on a central pivot. Total back and forth movement of either front wheel on this axle shall be limited to two inch (2 X one inch). Stops must be installed to prevent over-steering. The steering movement must be smooth.
2. The carts must have a braking system capable of slowing the cart to a smooth, short and safe straight line stop without damaging the road surface.
3. Cable links used in steering and brake systems must be secure and not slip under stress.
4. Adjusting hardware must be lockable. Turnbuckles must be lock-wired, or zip tied in the final adjusted position.
5. **All brake and steering components should be readily visible and accessible without disassembly of the cart.**
6. There shall be no exposed sharp edges or points. Exposed edges that may be contacted by the driver shall be rounded and smooth. Protective cushioning material may also be fitted.
7. There shall be no hard protruding ornamentation on the cart.
8. You may decorate/paint the cart any way you wish, but in good taste. Funny and humorous is good.

Now the Really important Stuff!

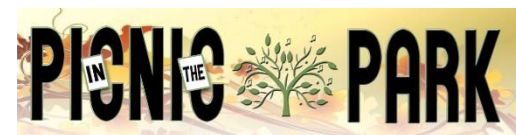
It is vitally important that the cart can be driven repeatedly without steering and brakes adjustment.

Thoroughly test steering and brake mechanisms for strength, repeatable and effective operation.

Test the whole cart on a sloping surface. Make certain, through testing, that all the intended drivers can safely operate the cart.

You must arrive at the derby with a TESTED soapbox cart and drivers

If you have questions or need help, contact
manotickderby@gmail.com



The Annual Allan Haan Soapbox Derby
in Manotick
held in conjunction with the
Picnic-in-the-Park
Sunday, August 30, 2026

Beaverwood Road, Manotick

Hosted by
Manotick Village &
Community Association
www.manotickvca.org



Derby Race Rules and Cart Specifications



See the derby on YouTube.

A Fun Race

Summer is the time for kids and their parents to use their creativity by building a soapbox cart and racing it in the Manotick Soapbox Derby. The Manotick Village and Community Association (MVCA) will hold its 14th annual soapbox derby on **Sunday, August 30, 2026** on Beaverwood Road next to Centennial Park in Manotick.

Along with the Picnic in the Park, this is a whole day of fun for everyone. Starting at **8:00AM** carts will be inspected at the top of Maple Street. **Please arrive early so racing can start on time!** If participating in the race, please plan to be there for the whole day. To participate and run your cart in the derby, you need to register online at www.manotickvca.org/derby. **There is a \$30 fee per cart for this event.**

Registration closes on Friday August 21, 2026, or earlier if the maximum number of participants has been reached. Please register early to secure your spot.

This is a fun derby, anyone age 7 to 17 years is welcome to participate. We ask participants for consent to use pictures taken for future derby promotion.

In case of inclement weather, the derby may be cancelled. There will be a notice on our website www.manotickvca.org on the morning of the derby day. There will be posts on MVCA social media as well. If the derby is cancelled the registration fees will be refunded.

Volunteers and Sponsors

We need your help in running the derby. To be a volunteer or sponsor, please send an email to Events@manotickvca.org and we will contact you.

Race Rules

1. For reasons of safety, carts must meet the Construction Specification described herein.
2. Each Cart will race four heats. The driver in each of the races need not be the same person but all drivers must be registered in advance.
3. During race day carts may not be modified to suit different drivers. Only minor seat adjustment is permitted.
4. Total weight shall be limited to cart plus driver. **No extra weights of any nature shall be added.**
5. Minimum age of participants is 6 on derby day.
6. Participants **and** parents/guardians must be available any time from 8:00 AM until the end of racing. Participants who are not available when called may be eliminated from further competition.
7. Carts may be inspected prior to each race to ensure they are safe for racing. Ruling by the inspectors shall not be challenged. Carts rejected by the inspector must be promptly removed from the starting location.
8. When racing, drivers must wear a helmet with chinstrap.
9. Carts must stay in their lane. Drivers who purposely cross the centre line or purposely run into the cone brake barrier at the finish line are subject to disqualification of that race.
10. Carts involved in an accident during the race will be inspected by the committee to help determine the cause of the accident. An accident is deemed to have occurred when a cart causes injury to persons or damage to property other than the cart itself.
11. The race judges' decisions are final and shall not be contested.
12. In case of inclement weather, race officials may halt or cancel the races.
13. The most important rule is **"SAFETY FIRST"**. Participants shall obey race officials. **DRIVE SAFELY!**

NOTE:

A waiver must be signed (by a parent or guardian for racers under the age of 18) before the racer will be permitted to participate.

Home-built Soapbox Carts

This derby is as much about having fun racing as it is about building a soapbox racing cart. Youngsters are encouraged to try their hands at building one. Parents and grandparents may be of great help.

Should you be fortunate enough to have access to a soapbox cart stored and forgotten in a barn or attic somewhere, you may be able to use it.

Painting and decorating a cart is fun. You can finish the cart any way you wish within the specified construction guidelines.

Special prizes will be awarded to funniest, most creative and most innovative carts.

All carts that enter this derby must meet the Construction Specifications described herein.

There are numerous websites that offer plans and suggestions for soapbox carts. Look them over before deciding on the general characteristics of the cart you want to build.

Your local hardware store has items typically used in cart construction: axles, wheels, cable, cable clamps, fasteners, pulleys, turnbuckles etc.

There are loaner carts available on a first come basis for youth racers who are unable to build or obtain one. Please request a loaner cart during registration. There is no fee for a loaner cart, but the carts are limited to one per family.

A soapbox building workshop will be held in May and June if there is community interest. Please check the website for details.

