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So, you want to run with the bulls in Pamplona

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Anyone not content to watch the running of the bulls in Pamplona, Spain, from the sidelines should be mindful of a few particulars before risking life and limb in the street.

There are rules: You must be at least 18 and not still inebriated from last night's party. No sandals or flip-flops, no backpacks (bulls are drawn to the swaying of the backpack) and no cameras or phones. Last year a runner stopped to pose for a selfie. Bad idea; it endangers other runners. You'll be fined.

Don't touch a bull; it could cause it to turn and stick someone with those deadly horns. Green-shirted shepherds running with the bulls carry long sticks to herd the animals and may whack you if you lay a hand on them.

The more runners crowding the streets, the more likely you will be pushed or fall and be trampled. Between 2,000 and 5,000 runners join the run each day, the highest numbers on weekends. Most are inexperienced first-timers. About 80 percent of the runners are younger than 35, 8 percent are women, 60 percent are foreigners, including 22 percent from North America.

Between 200 and 300 people are injured each year, an average of 10 are gored, but because ambulances line the route to quickly treat the injured, there have been only 15 deaths in the past 100 years.

The six fighting bulls run at almost 15 miles per hour and weigh around 1,100 pounds. Eight to 10 steers, at about 1,500 pounds each, run with them to encourage them to stick with the herd. If a bull is separated from the herd, it gets disoriented and can turn on you.

No one runs the entire half-mile route, so you choose the section you wish to run. Each has challenges: steep, narrow or curved, which can cause bulls to careen into buildings or barricades and fall on slick streets. You don't want to be there when they do.

There's no practical reason to run the bulls. Once it was a means of moving them from a corral at the city limits to the bullring in the center of town. It happened early in the morning before people went to work. A few local men assisted the shepherds, and once the job was done, shops opened and people went about their business. Now a truck could easily transport the bulls to the ring -- but what would be the fun in that?