



# Sprint spectacular

Now in its fifth year, the Formula 1 Sprint calendar promises to be bigger and better than ever

**M**arking the 75th anniversary of the FIA Formula 1 World Championship, the F1 2025 sprint race calendar returns for its fifth season, promising high-intensity action. Sprint races provide drivers with valuable opportunities to gain points and shake up the championship standings. With six sprints scheduled and significant driver lineup changes, this season is set to be thrilling.

While the sprint format has evolved since its 2021 debut, 2025 retains the current structure. The sprint race is a fast-paced, 100km dash lasting around 30 minutes. Unlike the highly strategic full-length races (which are usually twice

the length), sprints encourage aggressive racing, making them a must-watch event.

Still an evolving concept, sprint races were introduced to enhance the fan experience by ensuring high-stakes racing action on all three days of a Grand Prix weekend. Previously used in the junior series since 2005, only the top eight finishers in the sprint race earn championship points, adding another layer of excitement to the title battle.

While different to the Grand Prix weekend, there are no changes to the sprint weekend schedule, providing a smooth transition for drivers into each race.

A typical Formula 1 weekend usually takes place over three days - Friday, Saturday, and Sunday -

featuring five on-track sessions. A standard schedule includes three one-hour free practice sessions, followed by a one-hour qualifying session to determine the starting grid, and finally, the Grand Prix on Sunday.

Sprint weekends, however, shake up the schedule. Two practice sessions are removed, allowing for Sprint Qualifying on Friday, which sets the grid for Saturday's morning sprint race. That afternoon, traditional qualifying determines the starting order for Sunday's Grand Prix.

With fewer practice sessions, teams have minimal time to fine-

tune their setups, adding extra pressure. And with additional points on offer during a sprint weekend, the competition becomes even more fierce.

## 21 – 23 MARCH: SHANGHAI

Kicking off the sprint season in Round 2, Shanghai returned after its 2024 debut. Known for one of the longest straights in F1 schedule, the track offers excellent overtaking opportunities. Notably, its layout resembles the Chinese symbol for 'Shang', meaning upward – a fitting metaphor for the drivers aiming to climb the rankings. Lewis Hamilton stormed to a surprise pole, while Verstappen – who took victory in the Shanghai ➤

**Above: The Australian GP at the Albert Park street circuit in Melbourne**





**Above: Drivers Verstappen and Norris Right: 2025 Shanghai F1 Sprint winner Hamilton Below: Spanish driver Alonso**

Sprint back in 2024 – was only 0.018s away in second place. Hamilton went on to claim victory to add to his tally of wins in Shanghai and claim his debut P1 for the Scuderia. After a strong start when the lights went out, Hamilton built a commanding lead and – while it was not entirely smooth sailing, his SF-25 experiencing graining on the tyres at one stage – the seven-time World Champion looked in stunning form across the 19-lap event.

**2 – 4 MAY: MIAMI**

Held in Round 6, this city street circuit at the Miami Gardens provides an urban racing atmosphere steering drivers around 19 corners designed for close competition. For viewers, there are many vantage points where you can see all turns of the entire track due to the purpose built (but temporary) stadium.



**25 – 27 JULY: SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS**

Returning to the sprint calendar for the first time since 2023, Belgium's Spa replaces Austria's sprint race in Round 13 of the season. Famed for its high-speed corners and unpredictable weather, Spa is both thrilling and dangerous. While drivers relish the challenge, concerns about wet-weather safety persist, making this one of the most debated sprint additions.

**17 – 19 OCTOBER: AUSTIN**

In its third consecutive sprint season, the Circuit of the Americas (COTA) remains a fan favorite. Featuring dramatic elevation changes and technical twists, it consistently delivers exciting battles.

**7 – 9 NOVEMBER: SÃO PAULO**

Interlagos, a sprint staple since 2021, is known for producing chaotic and unpredictable races. A defining feature of this circuit is its undulating terrain, making it more challenging to drive and demanding greater engine power. The track's counterclockwise layout adds to the difficulty, with hard left turns exerting unusual centrifugal forces on drivers' necks, making races both tough on the cars and physically demanding for the drivers.

**5 – 7 DECEMBER: QATAR**

Closing the sprint season, Qatar's Lusail Circuit provides a fast-paced challenge under the lights. Over a kilometre of the track is dedicated to the main straight, offering ample overtaking opportunities heading into turn 1. Fan favourite McLaren driver, Lando Norris, set the lap record for this circuit just last year (2024), heightening the tension for an exciting finale to both the sprint and Grand Prix seasons this year.

[formula1.com](https://www.formula1.com) ■