

Take your best route to the
middle of nowhere....



After 11 months as royal retainers, we have been to events in nearly every group in the kingdom. In that time, we have learned that there are many autocrats who don't know how to write directions.

Introduction

- ▶ Discussion leaders
 - Meistari Isabel Ulfsdottir
 - Hersir Danr Bjornsson
- ▶ Guided Discussion format
- ▶ Explore actual examples of event directions and analyze their effectiveness
- ▶ Location names have been changed to protect the guilty 😊

Example One

Take your best route to HWY 1 north of Smallville. Go north from Smallville and turn right onto High School Road. The school is on your right.



The autocrat, intentionally or unintentionally, is limiting attendance at this event to the local group only.

“Smallville” was a town that no one outside the county would have been likely to have heard of, much less know where it was. Good directions start with a state, interstate, and nearest large city.

There are no distances or landmarks at all.

Example Two

Turn right into the first entrance coming south on Route 1 from the beltway. Keep going up the hill straight around the big "U." [traffic circle -- ed] University Hall is on the left between the bus turnaround and the health center, across from the student union. There is NO sign for it. You must continue on to parking.

There are three beltways in this kingdom: DC, Richmond, and Raleigh. Which one are we talking about?

The big "U" was the university letter, and was actually recognizable on the ground even though the directions were confusing to read.

Universities tend to have few or no signs on any of their buildings, so distances, directions and landmarks would have helped a lot here.

There is no information in the directions about parking.

Example Three

Take your best route to HWY 321 toward Bigtown, NC. Continue on Hwy 321 through the city of Bigtown. Approximately 3.5 miles after the last traffic light in the city will come to a flashing yellow light, turn right onto Hwy 245. Continue on Hwy 245 for 9/10 of a mile. Turn right staying on Hwy 245. Continue for 4.5 miles before turning right into Camp Pine Tree.



Now we're starting with an obscure highway near a town that the neighboring baronies, at least, have probably heard of.

How do we know we're at the "last traffic light in the city," to start measuring the distance? This really needs a landmark.

Example Four

From I-95 take exit 130B West (Obscureville, Route 4). Go 9.5 miles on route 4. Turn left onto route 421 (Apple Plank Rd.) Go 5.4 miles and turn right on to Windy Acres Lane.

Another town nobody has heard of. We have an interstate and exit number, but we don't know what state we're in.

There are distances, which is good, and road numbers. They even included a road's local name with one number; this is always useful. Landmarks would a nice to have.

Example Five

Take your best route to I-64 to 288 just west of Gotham City. Take the exit for 288 south and continue on 288 to the exit for 360 West to Smalltown. Turn left at the bottom of the ramp and continue on business 360 almost 2 miles to Dog Run Rd. (Route 614) on the left. Continue 1 mile on 614 and take a right after the fairgrounds into Tom Scott Park.



This time we start with an interstate and well-known city. Is “288” a highway or an exit number? Oh, in the second sentence we see it’s probably a highway.

The directions are otherwise pretty good. It could use more landmarks but most people found this site without too much trouble.

Guidelines for Writing Directions

- ▶ Assume that people following your directions have NEVER been to your town before.
- ▶ Start all directions from a well know city and interstate highway.
- ▶ Include exit numbers, route numbers, local names of roads, landmarks, and distances.
- ▶ Test your directions on someone new to the area.
 - Give them a cell phone and the directions.
 - If they have to call you, rewrite your directions.

If you want good attendance, write the directions for people who live 3 or more hours away, not your local group.

Don't forget to make sure that whoever puts the signs up uses those same directions, and puts the signs where they can be seen BEFORE the person needs to slow down for the turn.