

Dealing with the MESS after a Cyclocross race

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Cyclocross is a blast, especially when it's super muddy. But after the race, you have a HUGE mess to clean up. You need to clean up yourself, as well as your bike. Here's what I do. If you have any suggestions, please let me know!

I pack a few things for clean-up:

- Towel (for you)
- rag (for your bike)
- sprayer, filled with warm, slightly soapy water
- scrub brush
- plastic bags (for clothes)
- change of clothes for post race
- old sheet/blanket or cloth tarp

First, clean your bike:

Use the sprayer to clean your bike off. Standing in line for the hose (if your race venue even provides them) sucks. Use a scrub brush or even your hand to loosen the mud so it comes off quickly. Start at the top of your bike, and work your way down (think about it).

If you have a bike rack, rack your bike. If not, put down a tarp or old sheet so the inside of your car doesn't look like you do.

Clean yourself:

Look at yourself. Seriously. You are a mess. You can't possibly hope to get fully clean, but you can get close enough to drive home and go inside without getting your car filthy, and your significant other chasing you out of the house and hosing you down.

When you undress, take off your clothes and leave everything inside out. This keeps the mud inside your clothes, and makes handling them much more pleasant.

I start by taking off shoes, socks, and leg covers if I have them on (e.g. knee warmers). Use the sprayer to hose off your legs, scrub with your hand to loosen the dirt. You can use a towel to finish the job.

Do the same with your arms if you didn't have long sleeves on.

Now scrub your face with a little water and finish the job with that towel.

If you have any water left, you can even clean off your helmet.



sprayer



brush

Your jersey, shorts, gloves, socks, etc, should all be inside out. Put them in a plastic bag so your car stays reasonably clean. If you're shy about undressing in public, you can wrap that towel around you or duck into your car.

Once you get home:

When you get home, you might want to give your bike a once-over with the hose, to get anything you couldn't quite get with the sprayer. Dry it off with that towel you brought. Lube your chain, and put your bike away.

Next, empty that plastic bag of dirty clothes onto your driveway/parking lot/whatever. Hose them off and get the big chunks of mud off. Also hose off your shoes and get them nice and clean.

Wrap the clothes in your towel (that towel gets a lot of use). Take them inside and call dibs on the next laundry load. Use plenty of soap and maybe some Oxi Clean.

Stuff your shoes with old newspaper so they dry quickly. Keeping them inside (rather than in a garage or porch) will obviously get them dry a lot faster.

Take a shower, you stink

Take a shower, you really do stink. When you finish, your bike and clothes are all put away, and you have nothing to clean up.