








TRAIL
DIFFICULTY
RATING
SYSTEM —
MOUNTAIN
BIKE








USER GUIDE

	VERY EASY 	EASIEST 	MORE DIFFICULT 	VERY DIFFICULT 	EXTREMELY DIFFICULT 
Description	Likely to be a fire road or wide single track with a gentle gradient, smooth surface and free of obstacles. Frequent encounters are likely with other cyclists, walkers, runners and horse riders.	Likely to be a combination of fire road or wide single track with a gentle gradient, smooth surface and relatively free of unavoidable obstacles. Short sections may exceed these criteria. Frequent encounters are likely with walkers, runners, horse riders and other cyclists.	Likely to be a single trail with moderate gradients, variable surface and obstacles.	Likely to be a challenging single trail with steep gradients, variable surface and many obstacles.	Extremely difficult trails will incorporate very steep gradients, highly variable surface and unavoidable, severe obstacles.
Suitable for	Beginner/ novice cyclists. Basic bike skills required. Suitable for most bikes.	Beginner/ novice cyclists. Basic bike skills required. Suitable for most bikes.	Beginner/ novice cyclists. Basic bike skills required. Suitable for most bikes.	Experienced mountain bikers with good skills. Suitable for better quality mountain bikes.	Highly experienced mountain bikers with excellent skills. Suitable for quality mountain bikes.
Fitness Level	Most people in good health.	Most people in good health.	A good standard of fitness.	Higher level of fitness.	Higher level of fitness.
Trail Width	Two riders can ride side by side.	Shoulder width or greater.	Handlebar width or greater.	Can be less than handlebar width.	Can be less than handlebar width.
Trail Surface and obstacles	Hardened with no challenging features on the trail.	Mostly firm and stable. Trail may have obstacles such as logs, roots and rocks.	Possible sections of rocky or loose tread. Trail will have obstacles such as logs, roots and rocks.	Variable and challenging. Unavoidable obstacles such as logs, roots, rocks drop-offs or constructed obstacles.	Widely variable and unpredictable. Expect large, committing and unavoidable obstacles.
Trail Gradient	Climbs and descents are mostly shallow.	Climbs and descents are mostly shallow, but trail may include some moderately steep sections.	Mostly moderate gradients but may include steep sections.	Contains steeper descents or climbs.	Expect prolonged steep, loose and rocky descents or climbs.

Taken from IMBA Australia – Trail Difficulty Rating System 2013

LAND MANAGERS GUIDE

	VERY EASY 	EASIEST 	MORE DIFFICULT 	VERY DIFFICULT 	EXTREMELY DIFFICULT 
Description	<p>Likely to be a fire road or wide single track with a gentle gradient, smooth surface and free of obstacles</p> <p>Frequent encounters are likely with other cyclists, walkers, runners and horse riders.</p>	<p>Likely to be a combination of fire road or wide single track with a gentle gradient, smooth surface and relatively free of unavoidable obstacles.</p> <p>Short sections may exceed these criteria.</p> <p>Frequent encounters are likely with walkers, runners, horse riders and other cyclists.</p>	<p>Likely to be a single trail with moderate gradients, variable surface and obstacles.</p> <p>Dual use or preferred use</p> <p>Optional lines desirable</p>	<p>Likely to be a challenging single trail with steep gradients, variable surface and many obstacles.</p> <p>Single use and direction</p> <p>Optional lines XC, DH or trails</p>	<p>Extremely difficult trails will incorporate very steep gradients, highly variable surface and unavoidable, severe obstacles.</p> <p>Single use and direction</p> <p>Optional lines XC, DH or trails</p>
Trail Width	2100mm plus or minus 900mm	900mm plus or minus 300mm for tread or bridges	600mm plus or minus 300mm for tread or bridges	300mm plus or minus 150mm for tread or bridges Structures can vary	150mm plus or minus 100mm for tread or bridges Structures can vary
Trail Surface	Hardened or smooth	Mostly firm and stable	Possible sections of rocky loose tread	Variable and challenging	Widely variable and unpredictable
Average Trail Grade	Climbs and descents are mostly shallow. Less than 5% average.	Climbs and descents are mostly shallow, but may include some moderately steep sections. 7% or less average.	Mostly moderate gradients but may include steep sections. 10% or less average.	Contains steeper descents or climbs. 20% or less average.	Expect prolonged steep, loose and rocky descents or climbs. 20% or greater average
Maximum Trail Grade	Max 10%	Max 15%	Max 20% or greater	Max 20% or greater	Max 40% or greater
Level of Trail Exposure	Firm and level fall zone to either side of trail corridor	Exposure to either side of trail corridor includes downward slopes of up to 10%	Exposure to either side of trail corridor includes downward slopes of up to 20%	Exposure to either side of trail corridor includes steep downward slopes or freefall	Exposure to either side of trail corridor includes steep downward slopes or freefall
Natural Obstacles and Technical Trail Features (TTF's)	No obstacles	<p>Unavoidable obstacles to 50mm (2") high, such as logs, roots and rocks.</p> <p>Avoidable, rollable obstacles may be present.</p> <p>Unavoidable bridges 900mm wide.</p> <p>Short sections may exceed criteria.</p>	<p>Unavoidable, rollable obstacles to 200mm (8") high, such as logs, roots and rocks.</p> <p>Avoidable obstacles to 600mm may be present.</p> <p>Unavoidable bridges 600mm wide.</p> <p>Width of deck is half the height.</p> <p>Short sections may exceed criteria.</p>	<p>Unavoidable obstacles to 380mm (15") high, such as logs, roots, rocks, drop-offs or constructed obstacles.</p> <p>Avoidable obstacles to 1200mm may be present.</p> <p>Unavoidable bridges 600mm wide.</p> <p>Width of deck is half the height.</p> <p>Short sections may exceed criteria.</p>	<p>Large, committing and unavoidable obstacles to 380mm (15") high.</p> <p>Avoidable obstacles to 1200mm may be present.</p> <p>Unavoidable bridges 600mm or narrower.</p> <p>Width of bridges is unpredictable.</p> <p>Short sections may exceed criteria.</p>

