

Blocco stradale di 3-7 minuti

da tradurre e scrivere bene

Blocking roads is a core part of the Extinction Rebellion strategy. When it comes to doing an all out rebellion in our state capitals we will be aiming to occupy and shut down streets day after day. But to grow the movement and get people experiencing the thrill of disobedience it's crucial to do smaller roadblocks in your local town or city first.

The action coordinator of the group should explain that the point of this action is to grow the movement, cause some local controversy to get people talking, get a picture to show to the press and to prepare people for mass civil disobedience. Overcoming fears is best done by actually doing direct action with other people in a safe way.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Have a press release ready to send out.
- Large Extinction Rebellion banner wide enough to stretch across the road you're going to block
- Signs saying, "This is a peaceful protest - we will only be here for 3 minutes. We are very sorry for the wait/inconvenience."
- Cookies or similar tasty food to hand to motorists

PREPARING FOR THE ACTION

- Decide on the time and place of the action (on the weekend is best so people can make the time).
- Get a verbal commitment from at least 15 people they will take part in the action. This means you'll probably end up with about 10 people.
- Have a coordinator to call people onto the road and off the road.
- Have a person who will time the 3-minute action and let the coordinator know when time is up.
- Have two people who will hold a banner across the road. Choose a road with not more than two lanes. The banner will need to be long enough to cover at least the two lanes.
- Have two "cookie people" (perhaps the oldest and/or smallest people) to bring treats to the drivers - homemade cookies are nice if you think people will take them, otherwise prepackaged. Each person should carry about 10 items.
- Have one person and/or a journalist ready to livestream the action, take photos etc.

DOING THE ACTION

1. Everyone practices the routine in another location, where traffic is unlikely to be blocked. Do it about 3 times (see below for what to do).
2. Everyone congregates at the agreed-upon location. Once everyone has arrived, everyone follows the coordinator to the crossing and pays attention to the traffic lights.
3. As the lights go red, the coordinator shouts, "Everyone in the road!" Coordinator herds everyone onto the road to stand behind the banner, holding it tightly and facing the stationary traffic. It is very important the banner is unrolled and the two banner carriers have organised who is walking toward the other side of the road, and who is going to stay closer to the sidewalk. The person going to the other side of the road goes as quickly as they can walk to the other side and they both get it taut, with the writing facing the traffic and the writing the right way up.
4. The two people with the apology signs stand at each end of the banner holding up the signs to the cars.
5. The two cookie people walk straight up to the first two cars. And say the following:
 - "I am so sorry, there is going to be a delay for a few minutes because of this climate change protest – could I possibly offer you one of my cookies?"
 - If they are at all angry at you, simply repeat their words back to them in a slightly different way, and then apologize again. Do not try to convince them of anything, and do not under any circumstances become defensive or aggressive. (It's good for the cookie people to role play dealing with aggressive drivers several times in the practice session.)
 - So a conversation can be as follows:
 - "You can't be serious! I have to get downtown! What are you idiots doing blocking the f---ing road?"
 - "I'm really sorry you have to get downtown right away. That's really annoying, I'm really really sorry – could I give you one of my cookies?"
 - "I really don't want a cookie, thanks, I really need to get going."
 - "No problem – yeah, I'm really sorry about the delay – the protest will be finishing literally in about 2 minutes – are you sure you don't want a cookie, I made them myself?"
 - "Okay I'll have one, but can you just tell these people to get out of my way?"
 - Once they have calmed down, then move onto the next car.
 - "Hi, so sorry for the short delay here. Could I give you a cookie?"
 - "Yeah, what's going on here?"
 - "It's just a short, 2-minute protest thing – just wondering if I can give you a cookie – I made them fresh this morning..."
 - And so on....
 - In the unlikely case of the possibility of physical aggression, then the coordinator makes the final decision on whether to clear the road before the end of the 3 minutes, shouting, "Okay, everyone off the road!"
 - Once the 3 minutes is up, then wait for the lights to turn to red and then the coordinator shouts "everyone off the road".
 - Everyone then goes to an agreed-upon place to have a picnic or meet up in a café.

- During the debrief there, people split into 3's or 4's and chat about what the experience was like for them.
 - The coordinator tells people when the next swarm is (they should happen every 2-4 weeks depending on how fast the group is growing). All new people to the group who are considering civil disobedience have to do this action before processing onto state capital actions or any mass action.
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XRA INSTRUCTIONS FOR A 3-MINUTE ROADBLOCK

STANDARD ACTION PLAN FOR BLOCKING A ROAD

The action coordinator of the group should explain that the point of this action isn't to change anything but to get a picture to show to the press and to prepare people for mass civil disobedience. Overcoming fears is best done by actually doing direct action with other people in a safe way.

The key elements are:

- Decide on the **time and place** of the action (on the weekend is best so people can make the time).
- Have a **press release** ready to send out. [Need a standard template]
- Get a verbal commitment from at least **15 people** they will take part in the action. This means you'll probably end up with about 10 people.
- Have a large **Extinction Rebellion banner**.
- Have a **coordinator** to call people onto the road and off the road.
- Have a **person who will time** the 3-minute action and let the coordinator know when time is up.
- Have **two people with big signs** saying, "This is a peaceful protest - we will only be here for 3 minutes. We are very sorry for the wait/inconvenience."
- Have **two people who will hold a banner** across the road. Choose a road with not more than two lanes. The banner will need to be long enough to cover at least the two lanes.
- Have **two "cookie people"** (perhaps the oldest and/or smallest people) to bring treats to the drivers - homemade cookies are nice if you think people will take them, otherwise prepackaged. Each person should carry about 10 items.
- Have **one person and/or a journalist ready to livestream** the action, take photos etc.

The run of the action:

1. Everyone **practices the routine** in another location, where traffic is unlikely to be blocked. Do it about 3 times (see below for what to do).

2. Everyone **congregates** at the agreed-upon location. Once everyone has arrived, everyone follows the coordinator to the crossing and pays attention to the traffic lights.
3. As the lights go red, the coordinator shouts, "**Everyone in the road!**" Coordinator herds everyone onto the road to stand behind the banner, holding it tightly and facing the stationary traffic. It is very important the banner is unrolled and the two banner carriers have organised who is walking toward the other side of the road, and who is going to stay closer to the sidewalk. The person going to the other side of the road goes as quickly as they can walk to the other side and they both get it taut, with the writing facing the traffic and the writing the right way up.
4. The two people with the **apology signs** stand at each end of the banner holding up the signs to the cars.
5. The two **cookie people** walk straight up to the first two cars. And say the following:
 - "I am so sorry, there is going to be a delay for a few minutes because of this climate change protest – could I possibly offer you one of my cookies?"
 - If they are at all angry at you, simply repeat their words back to them in a slightly different way, and then apologize again. Do not try to convince them of anything, and do not under any circumstances become defensive or aggressive. (It's good for the cookie people to role play dealing with aggressive drivers several times in the practice session.)
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 - And so on....
 - In the unlikely case of the possibility of physical aggression, then the coordinator makes the final decision on whether to clear the road **before the end** of the 3 minutes, shouting, "Okay, everyone off the road!"
 - Once the **3 minutes is up**, then wait for the lights to turn to red and then the coordinator shouts "everyone off the road".
 - Everyone then goes to an agreed-upon place to have a picnic or **meet up** in a café.
 - During the **debrief** there, people split into 3's or 4's and chat about what the experience was like for them.

- The coordinator tells people when the next swarm is (they should happen every 2-4 weeks depending on how fast the group is growing). All new people to the group who are considering civil disobedience have to do this action before processing onto state capital actions or any mass action.
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Swarming is an easy entry level type of civil disobedience in which rebels do short roadblocks all across a city to cause gridlocked traffic. Swarming can be done by just a single affinity group blocking one road or it can be scaled up to have thousands of rebels blocking roads all across a city at once. Find a video resource [here](#).

DESIGN

1. Form rebels into small affinity groups depending on the size of the roads you're planning to block. Around 5 rebels per lane of traffic is about right.
2. Identify significant road junctions in your city that are likely to cause maximum disruption. Consider:

- Bridges: blocking all the bridges in a city cuts it in half and causes major disruption
- An exit road from a roundabout: this backs up traffic around the roundabout and blocks multiple roads at once.
- Swarming during rush hour: this is the most effective time to cause mass disruption.

1. Assemble your group next to a traffic light and wait for the traffic to be brought to a complete halt by the red light before stepping into the road. Never attempt to step into the road when the traffic is moving.
2. Walk calmly and slowly into the road holding a banner that is wide enough to stretch across the highway with rebels spaced evenly behind it. The banner is essential to show to motorists that the road is completely blocked and it prevents motorcyclists or bikes from trying to break through your line.
3. Option A: Stand in the road for 7 minutes, step off for 3 minutes and let the traffic flow. Repeat.

Option B: Stand in the road until the police begin threatening you with arrest or trying to drag the first person off and then all calmly and slowly walk off the road, disperse and meet again around the corner on a new road and do the same again

1. When blocking the road make sure you've got biscuits and cake and politely offer them to drivers stuck in the queue of traffic. Be completely respectful, apologetic and patient with frustrated drivers explaining that you'll only be there a short time and offer them a leaflet explaining what you're doing.

2. Do this for an hour or two before going to a cafe nearby for a debrief. This is really helpful for making new rebels feel included and committed to taking part in your next action.

THINGS TO BRING

- Banners wide enough to stretch across the road
- Wear ordinary clothes so you can disappear back into the crowds in between road blocks
- Cakes & biscuits
- Flyers for passers by and motorists
- Water and snacks for rebels
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ROLES / TRAINING

- Make sure the majority rebels have taken part in a Non Violent Civil Disobedience training and feel prepared to react non-violently if motorists get aggressive or violent.
- Consider having descension or nonviolent communication trained rebels to de-escalate any confrontations

MESSAGING

- Swarming aims to cause enough disruption that the state or the city authorities are forced to respond. It's perfect for carrying XR's topline messaging and 3 demands.
- It's also a great way of announcing the presence of your new XR group in a town or city. It should get you fairly easy publicity and help grow your numbers.

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