

Louisiana PASS



The Iditarod

We all know that dogs are awfully smart, right? It's amazing how much they can understand and the tasks they can complete. But have you ever thought about asking a dog to drive you 1,100 miles?

Unlike horse races, where the horses are driven with reins, the Alaskan Iditarod races (sled dog races) are races in which dogs are driven by spoken commands. In fact, each dog on the team serves a specific purpose. For example, the leader of the team is the one who has to understand the spoken order, and lead the other team members. Now that's amazing!

Sled dog races have been around for about as long as humans and dogs have lived in snowy places. The first sled dog races that received worldwide attention were organized in Nome, Alaska. The Iditarod itself is a yearly race of about 1,100 miles from Anchorage to Nome. What makes the race course particularly unusual is that it's just about the *only* way to get from one city to the other—there are no roads or highways between them!

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[An Iditarod race for kids](#)

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