

Guidelines to Safe Group Riding

- **BE PREDICTABLE.** Ride smoothly and signal your intentions; don't weave around, stop suddenly, or make unannounced turns.
- **MAINTAIN A SAFE INTERVAL.** Three wheel widths is usually a safe distance for slower, less experienced riders. **Never** overlap wheels. Don't fixate on the lead rider's rear tire; judge your distance by using other references such as the lead rider's elbow or shoulder. If you're getting too close to the rider in front of you, let the rider behind you know you're slowing down, then slow down slightly by coasting or braking gently.
- **USE SIGNALS.** Always announce your intentions by using arm signals. For a left turn, point with the left arm straight out. For a right turn, angle the left arm straight up or point with the right arm. To slow or stop, angle the left arm down. When riding in a group, also say what you're going to do: "Left turn", "Right turn", "Slowing", "Stopping".
- **OBEY SIGNALS.** If you find yourself approaching a red light, **always** stop and obey the light. Call out "Stopping" if you become separated from riders ahead of you, and never try to beat the light just to stay with the pack. Similarly, if the group is passing through an intersection, always watch for approaching cars, even if riders ahead of you claim the intersection is clear.
- **GIVE WARNINGS.** If you see a monster pothole, glass all over the roadway, or a car coming out of a driveway, let others behind know about it. Say "Hole", "Glass", "Car right", and point to the hazard.
- **PASS ALONG WARNINGS.** If someone in back of you calls out "Car back", pass the warning up the line; if the leader calls out a turn or a sudden stop, signal and pass it down the line so the rest of the group knows.
- **LOOK BEFORE YOU MOVE.** If you want to change positions in the pack, such as going into double file or single file, or passing a rider, look around you to make sure the coast is clear, and let others know what you're doing (for instance, "passing on your left").
- **BE PREPARED TO RIDE SINGLE FILE.** If you are riding two-abreast and need to form a single line due to traffic conditions or overtaking traffic, the rider on the **right** should **slow down** slightly and let the rider on the **left** merge in front of him. The rider on the **left** should speed up slightly and **carefully** get in line. Always check around you to make sure the coast is clear before merging into the line.
- **WATCH FOR TRAFFIC.** Keep an eye or ear out for overtaking traffic, and say "Car back" (or "Truck back") if something's overtaking the group. Riders in the front should also watch for pedestrians, skaters, dog-walkers, etc., announce the hazard ("Runner up", "Dog up"), and give the runner, etc. plenty of room while passing him.
- **BE COURTEOUS.** As cyclists, "Share the road" is what we ask everyone else to do. We should do likewise and not block traffic unnecessarily. If you need to, move off the roadway. Don't ride two abreast in traffic, especially if other vehicles are trying to overtake you. If you are riding in traffic, stay as far right as is practicable and allow overtaking traffic to pass, but don't be afraid to take a lane if necessary for safety.
- **TELL SWEEP OR LEADER.** Before leaving the ride for any reason, tell the sweep or leader so that they will not be wondering what happened to you. If you get ahead of the leader, you are no longer part of the group and are on your own.