



2018 Group Riding Guidelines

Sussex Cyclists operates under guidelines that are expected to be followed on Group Rides by all riders that will be vigorously enforced by Ride Leaders.

It is the role of the Ride Leader to monitor and address ride safety issues and all riders are expected to accept their feedback and decisions. But it is the role of all participants to ride and behave in a safe, courteous manner and to assist each other to improve group riding skills and eliminate risky behaviors.

Below is a list of general guidelines which is intended to clearly layout the behavior expected on Club Group Rides. It is not an exhaustive detailing of all possible safe riding rules.

Our Guidelines can be summarized by the following statement.....

“Come prepared, Pay attention, Be predictable, Ride straight, Point out hazards, Know and obey the law, Peacefully and safely coexist with other cyclists, vehicles and pedestrians”

New to Road Cycling or Group Riding?

- Use our Group Ride Classifications as a guide for which ride to join.
- Learn by observing and practicing safe road cycling skills.
- Increase your comfort level on trafficked roads by riding in a group.
- Ask questions about road cycling skills and equipment.
- Experienced riders will help you if you have an issue (e.g. flat tire).

Before You Ride

- Select a Group Ride appropriate to your ability and conditioning – if in doubt, join an easier ride and/or one that is advertised as a mixed category (e.g. “D/F”, “C/C+”).
- Notify the Ride Leader of your intention to participate so you receive any changes.
- Make sure your bike is properly maintained and your tires are pumped up.
- Dress appropriately for the ride – consider wearing layers (e.g. base, jersey, jacket & bring additional items needed (e.g. long fingered gloves) when temperatures vary.
- Riders under 18 years must be accompanied by an adult.
- Eat lightly and pre-hydrate.
- **Be familiar with these Group Riding Guidelines; it is also strongly recommend you review the Club’s Safe Riding Guidelines and information on the Bicycle Friendly Delaware Act posted on our web site.**

What to Bring (and What NOT to Bring)

- Helmets are mandatory. Ride with one that fits you and is correctly adjusted and worn.
- Earphones of any type (except for hearing aides) are prohibited.
- We suggest you carry 2 water bottles on your bike or in your back pocket (one with a sports drink the other with water) and remember to hydrate often - drink before you get thirsty.
- Carry a spare tube, an inflation device (frame pump and/or CO2 cartridge), a set of tire levers (unless you have thumbs of steel!) and basic tools.
- Wear eye protection – tinted or clear.
- Carry your cell phone, but use it only when stopped and off the road where you will be safe from vehicular traffic and won’t create a safety issue for other cyclists.
- Even in daylight, to help increase your visibility use a rear red flashing light attached to your saddle bag, seat post or frame and a front facing white light (in blink or strobe mode).
- Time Trial (“tt”) bikes are prohibited on rides “B+” and under; allowed on “A” rides at the Ride Leader’s discretion.
- Use of aereobars during Group Rides is strongly discouraged but subject to the Ride Leader’s discretion, allowable when riding in the lead position.

- Pedal assisted eBikes are permitted except for training (“B+” and “A”) rides.

At Ride Start

- Plan on getting to ride start and being ready at least 15 minutes ahead of scheduled start time.
- Riders should be prepared (physically and equipment-wise) to ride at the speed level and distance for which the ride has been published.
- Seek out the Ride Leader (if new to the group, introduce yourself) and make him/her aware of any specific issues or questions you have about the ride.
- All riders- whether members or guests – must sign the Club Waiver before each Group Ride.
- Do a quick check of your ABC’s (Air, Brakes and Crank/Chain) before the ride starts
- Carry emergency contact information, applicable medical information, insurance card(s) & money.
- Check to make sure you have everything you need before the ride starts (e.g. snack, mirrors, lights, bike computer, extra tools) and if applicable, items are affixed to your bike.

During the Ride

- **The Ride Leader(s), (if applicable) Assistant Ride Leaders and Sweep Rider(s) have a goal of promoting safe and enjoyable riding for ALL riders on our Club Group Rides. While participating in a Sussex Cyclist Group Ride, you agree to follow their direction and decisions.**
- All riders are expected to obey all applicable laws including riding no more than two abreast
- You have a responsibility to not do anything that would compromise the safety of other riders or yourself.
- Ride at an even speed and make all your speed changes and moves smoothly so that you are easy to follow.
- Be predictable with all your actions.

- Ride at an appropriate distance from the edge of road and behind the rider in front of you – avoid overlapping wheels.
- Call out when passing a cyclist or pedestrian from behind and ride single file on heavily trafficked roads.
- Avoid passing another rider on the right side. Passing on the right is only permissible when the lead rider (rider at the front) is moving toward the back and has moved to the left and waived you up to pass them.
- Warn the riders in the group of road hazards, approaching vehicles, pedestrians or other cyclists and when you are slowing or stopping.
- Hand signals and vocal signals must be echoed from the front to the back and relayed from the back to the front to be effective.
- At intersections, warn of slowing and stopping your bike and approaching vehicles - even those at a distance.
- Never block the right turn lane at stops. Stay to the left of the turn lane unless turning right.
- Except at intersections, when stopping for any reason, get totally off the road - not doing so is dangerous to yourself and fellow cyclists and disrespectful to motorists.
- No rider will leave the ride or return to the start alone unless they specifically inform the Ride Leader prior to doing so.
- Except for “A” rides, no rider will be dropped by the group without specifically requesting that the group proceed without them.

Ride Etiquette

- Obey all traffic laws (e.g. stop at red lights, rolling stop with caution at stop signs).
- Single file when necessary (never more than two across), including when vehicles are overtaking (“car back”).
- Pay attention to rider in front of you, maintain safe spacing (generally one wheel width to one bike length) and don’t overlap wheels.
- Shout out and/or use hand singles to notify other riders of road / traffic hazards and when slowing or stopping to other riders.

- On well trafficked roads, when a single group of riders exceeds 8 bicycles, consider leaving gaps between subgroups of 10-20 car lengths to allow vehicles to “leap frog” instead of trying to pass the entire group at once.
- When there is a gap, notify lead rider by relaying “GAP” to rider in front of you.
- If rider(s) are left behind at light or road crossing, relay “RIDERS BACK” to rider in front of you. When applicable, riders left behind should shout out “riders back” and riders not delayed should slow down/soft pedal until they hear “we’re on” from the delayed riders, which should be relayed to rider in front of you.
- ALL Riders are responsible for helping to insure the safety of the group, and especially, the rider immediately behind them.
- Depending on your position in the group, riders may have additional responsibilities:
 - (1) First Rider is also responsible for calling out road hazards, “car left/right” for cars approaching intersections from the sides, “car up” (when appropriate), approaching pedestrians “walker/runner up”, overtaking other cyclists, etc.
 - (2) Second Rider is also responsible for checking back for gaps and riders that may have been left behind and notifying the first rider to adjust speed or come to a safe stop.
 - (3) Last Rider is also responsible for watching for cars approaching from the rear (“car back”, when appropriate) and when the group is making a left turn or moving to another lane in a multi lane road, shouting out “I have the lane” after first being reasonably satisfied that cars approaching from rear will either stop, slow or safely pass the group on the right.

After the Ride

- Provide the Ride Leader or a club member with any feedback you have and/or ask any questions.
- If transporting your bike outside your vehicle, make sure it is secured, We suggest you also remove any items of value that may fall off or be easily removed by others.
- **IF YOU ARE NOT A CLUB MEMBER, PLEASE CONSIDER JOINING SUSSEX CYCLISTS. YOUR PARTICIPATION WILL SUPPORT OUR ENDEAVORS IN PROMOTING SAFE AND ENJOYABLE CYCLING IN LOWER DELAWARE.**