



RBCC Group Ride Etiquette

1. The group rides in two abreast formation. Pair off in twos and rotate at the front at regular intervals. The frequency of rotation depends on the size of the group, the weather, the pace and the ability of the riders. The rider on the right hand side rotates to left hand side, using the "chainsaw" method of rolling (see diagram over page).
2. Maintain a steady straight line.
3. No sudden movements. Be predictable with all your actions. Avoid braking or changing direction suddenly. Likewise, don't get out of the saddle abruptly. It could cause the rider behind to hit you.
4. Lead riders should use hand signals to indicate stopping or turning as well as clearly audible shouted instructions.
5. Riders at the front and rear should warn of approaching cars, particularly on narrow roads. Call out for vehicles – shout "car up!" & "car back!" Panicked cries are not necessary. Just shout loud enough for the person in front/behind to pass on the call. All calls for changing lanes must come from the **back** of the bunch and be passed up.
6. Point out and call out any road hazards ahead. These include potholes, drains, speed ramps, animals, parked cars, opening car doors, wet road surface etc.
7. Don't overlap wheels. A slight direction change by the rider in front could easily catch you out. If you 'touch wheels' with the rider in front it's tough to keep upright.
8. Make sure to keep pedalling downhill when you are at the front of the group so that the riders behind don't bunch up behind you. It can be a bit fraught if everyone has to reach for their brakes. Change into the big ring going downhill if conditions/speed require it.
9. Be smooth with your turns at the front of the group. Avoid surges. Stay alongside and don't increase the pace to move a half wheel ahead of the rider alongside. He/she will have to speed up to maintain the two-by-two formation and the speed will escalate unnecessarily. Don't acquire a reputation as a 'half-wheeler'! Don't accelerate too quickly from traffic lights or a stationary start, remember it can take time for all the riders behind you to get up to your speed.
10. Don't sprint up to take your turn at the front. Move up smoothly with a small increase in pace and ease that pace ever so slightly when you move alongside.
11. Avoid leaving gaps when following wheels. Cyclists save a huge amount of energy by following in the slipstream of the rider in front. However, don't become mesmerized by the rear wheel of the rider in front as you concentrate on staying close as there's a good chance you'll ride into it! Keep looking well ahead to spot hazards and terrain changes.
12. When climbing hills, avoid following a wheel too closely. Many riders often lose their momentum when rising out of the saddle on a hill which can cause a sudden deceleration. This can often catch a rider who is following too closely, resulting in a fall from a wheel touch.
13. Don't panic if you brush shoulders, hands or bars with another rider. Try to stay relaxed in your upper body to absorb any bumps.
14. Wear a correctly fitted helmet on all club rides and make sure your bike is in good working order. No headphones should be worn whilst riding on club rides.
15. Always obey all road rules and traffic signals.

16. Bring a minimum of one spare tube, tyre levers and a pump. A second spare tube and a multi tool can be useful too. Also, bring some money in case you need emergency food supplies and a mobile phone in case you get stranded. Bring plenty of water or sports drink.
17. If the ride is going to be more than two hours, make sure to bring food. Start eating after about an hour and a half. The golden rule is to eat 'a little and often'.
18. Dress for the weather, and bring a spare jacket if rain is expected. Use your initiative regarding the conditions, if it looks like the weather is too bad to go out but the ride hasn't been officially cancelled, perhaps it is better to stay indoors!
19. **Relax and don't forget to have fun!**

"Chainsaw" Method of Rolling Explained:

The Club has adopted the "chainsaw" method of rolling off the front of the bunch. For those that do the Waterfall ride on Sunday you will know what we mean as we have been doing this for a number of years. For others not familiar with it, it means that the riders on the right hand side of the bunch are rolling over to the left. Therefore you end up doing half your turn on the front on the right hand side and then half on the left hand side. If this is done correctly it is much safer than having the front pair roll off and go to the back, causing the bunch to be 4-abreast. See the diagram below for a visual of the chainsaw method!

