



BUILDING THE CYCLING CULTURE IN BRANTFORD / BRANT

GROUP RIDE GUIDE:

While on the roads and trails, all group riders represent the Brant Cycling Club and are therefore committed to adhering to the Group Ride Guidelines herein presented in this document. Furthermore, we strive to create a positive image of cyclists and BCC among the larger community and to spread awareness of safe practices and the "Share the Road" campaign.



In order to participate in BCC rides or events, every rider must purchase Ontario Cycling Association insurance (\$44) and a BCC Club membership (\$30), unless you are participating in a sanctioned "try a ride" event, to which you are limited to one. Upon purchase of the insurance and membership, you will receive an electronic membership card. Print this card and keep it handy.

Proof of payment will be properly accounted for through the OCA and CCN. Payment fee is only required once per season. Fees are susceptible to change from year to year.

[Click](#) and follow the prompt to purchase insurance and membership.

If an ineligible rider insists on participating, even after being asked not to, then the BCC ride may proceed, however, the ride leader shall advise the ineligible rider, with a witness present, that they are ineligible, are not covered by any BCC insurance and are solely responsible for all of their own actions.

Club "Try a Ride" Opportunity:

The Ontario Cycling Association (OCA) is working with clubs, like ours, to host "Try a Ride" opportunities for non-members. This program is open to all members of the public who are interested in learning how to ride and potentially join the Club as a new member. For non-

members wishing to try out a BCC Ride, there are specific dates designated for “Try a Ride” rides. On these designated days, OCA waiver forms and tracking forms will be available at the beginning of the ride, and the individual will be required to complete, sign, and return the waiver to the ride leader prior to participating in the BCC Ride. “Try a Ride” waivers may only be used once per person per season; in order to participate in any future rides, an individual must purchase full insurance and membership. You will find these “Try a Ride” dates on our ride calendar.

Ride Preparedness:

Membership Card (as proof of membership and insurance purchase)

Working, well-maintained bike

Helmet

Rear bicycle light

Tire repair kit

Water & food

Piece of identification

Cellular phone

Alert Ride Leader and others of any major health concerns, such as epilepsy or heart conditions

Type of Rider:

It is important to choose the ride that is best suited to your current ability and comfort level. Even within the same ride there will be riders of different paces and abilities. Ride Leaders will break each ride group up accordingly.

Ride Classifications:

Novice

Novice rides are an ideal starting place for beginner riders who are **new to road cycling and are interested in learning the skill of group riding**. Novice riders will be coached progressively. First, basic cycling skills such as gearing, clipping in/out, hand signals and communication will be introduced. Then group riding skills such as drafting, as well as riding and rotating in formation. We utilize paved rail trail and gradually make our way onto the quieter country roads to practice road riding skills.

Distance: 25-35km (mix of paved rail trail and road)

Pace: 23-27km/hour

Casual

Casual Road Rides are ideal for laid-back road cyclists who want to get out for an enjoyable spin at a comfortable pace and catch up with friends. It's **more about recreation than pace, speed, or formation riding**. During these rides, riders will stick together in small groups and utilize safe cycling practices. This ride differs from our Novice Road Ride because there will not be as much emphasis on learning formation or pace line riding skills. As with all of our road rides, you are expected to know and abide by safe riding etiquette and rules of the road.

Distance: 25-35km (mix of paved rail trail and road)

Pace: 24-26km/hour

Intermediate I and II

Intermediate I is well-suited for those who have been road riding for a few years and are looking to increase their pace, distance, fitness or group riding skills. Participants should be comfortable learning how to ride and rotate in a group formation, both single file and two-abreast.

Intermediate II requires the knowledge and experience in road riding but has a slightly increased pace.

Distance: 35-90km depending on the day of the week – see ride calendar

Pace: 27-33km/hour

Advanced I and II

Advanced I rides are for seasoned, conditioned riders who want to be challenged by mixed terrain, pack riding, and tempo sessions. Advanced I is a great step up from Intermediate II for those who can hold an average pace of 30-33km/hour, but want to challenge themselves increasing the distance. It is a no drop ride.

Advanced II is a drop ride, and the pace is usually above 33+km/hour.

***Note:** As with all our group rides, Advanced I and II riders **must** practice safe riding etiquette as laid out by our Group Ride Guide. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action (as per the Discipline Policy), up to and including permanent suspension of membership.

Distance: 50-60km

Pace: 33-37km/hour

Ride Leaders:

We aim to have all BCC rides/events led by a designated, volunteer Ride Leader.

- Ride Leaders will determine the route (pace and distance), group size, and check-in points if necessary.
- Ride Leaders are aware of existing safety protocols and emergency plans.

Obey the Ride Leader

- Adhere to the verbal and visual instructions of the Ride Leader, including verbal call outs and hand signals that will be instructed.
- Stay within the distances and speeds as determined by the Ride Leader. Respect the group and the experience of all riders.

Communicate with the Ride Leader

- Do not stay with a ride that you are not comfortable on; communicate any concerns to the Ride Leader.
- Before dropping off any ride, make sure to tell the ride leader.

Rules of the Road:

Share the Road & Obey the Highway Traffic Act (HTA)

- Be courteous to other road users including automobiles and other bikes by riding no more than two abreast and by signaling well in advance of turns or stops.
- Take up as much of the road/shoulder as necessary to keep you safe (up to 1 meter as per Highway Traffic Act), and help motorists pass by waving them past if the road is clear.
- Give a "thumbs up" and wave thanks to courteous drivers.
- Try not to make any unnecessary, sudden movements.
- Keep your eyes moving and scanning the road in order to anticipate hazards including vehicle traffic, off-leash dogs, farm equipment, etc.
- When the group stops for any length of time, get off the road; do not stand ON the road.
- **We stop and put one foot down at all stop signs and red lights.**



- If you are at the front, clearly call “stopping” and put your hand out to signal to the entire group that you are stopping. New riders will model the behavior of the current members. Lead by example.
- Stopping also allows for regrouping.

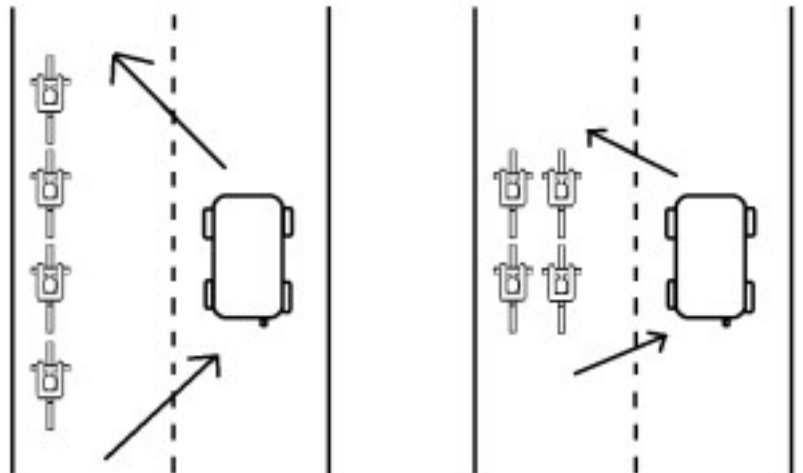


- Ride immediately behind the rider in front of you
 - Do not overlap wheels (this is Extremely Dangerous!)
 - No diagonal echelon in cross winds
- If you need to pass a rider in front of you (while riding casually, not in formation), proceed to do so on the *left* of the slower moving riders on the right (curb lane), as per HTA
- When you come to the front and hear the call that it is “clear” to pull in front of the lead rider on the right, immediately pull over.

Ride Formations:

Stay in smaller groups of 6-8 riders, maximum. This is important because a smaller group is:

- Easier and safer for motorists to pass
- Easier to match abilities
- Easier to shift formation
- Faster to communicate road hazards
- Ride Leaders will organize group sizes at start of the ride.
- On heavily traveled or narrow roads, riders should ride **single-file** in small packs of 6-8 people per group.

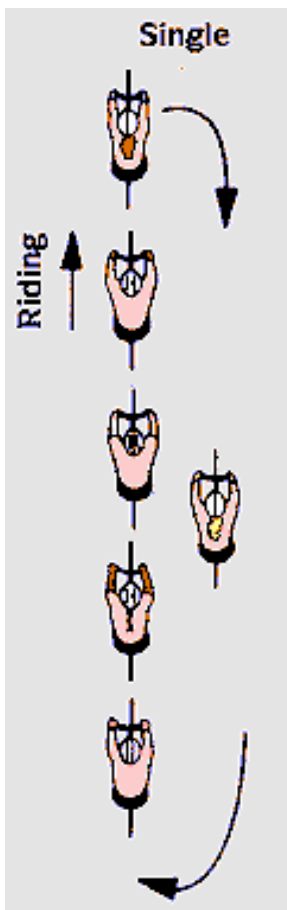


- On quieter, wide roads rides may ride **no more than double abreast** in small packs of 6-8 people. The Ride Leader will instruct you when it is acceptable to do so.
- **DO NOT** ride in the following formations, as they are dangerous for riders and motorists.
 - Too long single file lines. Motorists will be tempted to “squeeze” by when it is not safe. There is no communication between cyclists in a long single line to inform of an approaching car or hazard on the road, resulting in a “snaking” line which draws riders into traffic.
 - Too wide groups. This blocks motorist’s view of approaching traffic. For example, a double paceline, dropping back on both sides (= 4 wide)

Riding in Formation:

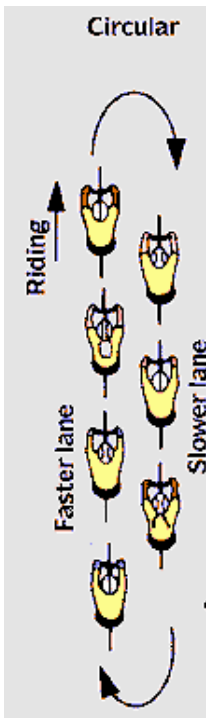
One of the greatest benefits in group riding is utilizing ride formation to maintain your pace while allowing for an active recovery of the muscles and cardio system. This allows you to travel further and faster without complete exertion.

When riding in formation it is **crucial** that you maintain smooth riding; no sudden movements, ensure good control of the handlebars, holding a steady line and pace, open and clear communication.



SINGLE-FILE PACELINE:

Riding in tight a single file line 1 meter from the edge of the road or the white line, the front rider pulls slightly to the right or left (determined by the wind) and eases up as he/she drops to the back of the line. The line of riders maintains their speed and holds a steady line. This should be a continuous rotation with the front rider “pulling” the group for anywhere between 30seconds to 2-3 mins depending on the pace.



ROTATING / CIRCULAR PACELINE:

Riders being in two parallel lines (2 abreast). The rider on the right (curb side) holds the pace while the rider on the left pulls slightly ahead. The rider on the right calls "clear" (meaning the advancing rider's rear tire is past the front tire of the moves in front of the rider on the right) to indicate that the advancing rider can now pull to the right. Similar to single pace line, the "pull" of the two front riders can last 30seconds to 2-3 mins depending on the pace. The direction of the rotation may change depending on wind direction.

Verbal and Visual Instruction:

"Call Outs" should be made loudly and clearly for all group riders to hear. All riders are responsible for helping the call outs get passed through the group by repeating it for the person behind them.

"Slowing" – indicates that you or the group is slowing in pace, so all riders should be prepared to apply to brakes and slow down.

"Stopping" – indicates that you or the group is stopping; this call out should be made with as much advanced notice as possible.

"Car (or rider) back" – indicates that there is a car(s) or rider approaching from the rear of the group.

"Car (or rider) up" – indicates that there is a car(s) or rider approaching from the front of the group.



“Gravel” or “Glass” – indicates that riders need to be cautious and avoid the gravel or glass on the road or trail.

“Right” or “Left” – indicates that the group will be turning.

“Single file” – indicates single file formation is necessary

“Double file” – indicates it’s safe to ride two side by side, please get into formation.

“Rotate” – indicates that the formation will begin a rotation pattern, as outline above.

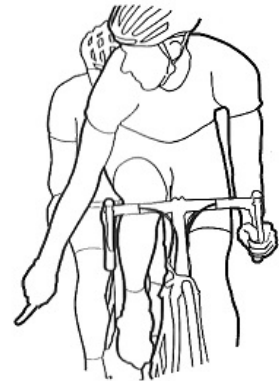
“Hold” – indicates that the formation should be held in its current position with no further rotations forward or back. This is often used in the situation of upcoming city traffic lights or stop signs that are close enough together than rotation patterns shouldn’t be used.

Hand signals should always be made to accompany verbal call outs, where applicable. Similar to call outs, hand signals should be passed through a group by repeating them for the riders behind.



- Slowing/stopping – placing your hand straight down, palm facing behind you indicates that you are slowing or stopping.
- Turning left – left arm straight out to the side, give advanced notice.
- Turning right – right arm straight out to the side, give advanced notice.
- Move to the right – left arm sweeps, outstretched behind you, from left to right. This indicates that riders behind you need to move left and file into a single line behind you, in order to make space for on-coming traffic or riders.
- Move to the left – right arm sweeps, outstretched behind you, from right to left. This indicates that riders behind you need to move left and file into a single line behind you, in order to make space for on-coming traffic or riders.

- Road hazards – gravel, glass, pot holes, cracks, sewers, etc should be highlighted to the group by clearly pointing at the hazard. It is every riders responsible to watch for these signals so that they may avoid the hazard without making any sudden movements.
- Single file – 1 finger raised overhead to indicate single file formation is necessary
- Double file (two abreast) – 2 finger raised overhead to indicate its safe to ride two side by side.
- Rotate – 1 or 2 fingers raised overhead and then in a circle motion to indicate the group will begin a rotating pattern.
- “Hold” – a closed fist held overhead indicates that the formation should be held in its current position with no further rotations forward or back. This is often used in the situation of upcoming city traffic lights or stop signs that are close enough together that rotation patterns shouldn’t be used.



Positive Group Riding Etiquette:

BE AWARE: Cycling, both on roads and trails, requires you to be aware of your surroundings (traffic, fellow riders, road hazards, personal health, etc) and responsive to the situation (call outs, signals, rotations). Every rider is responsible for keeping focused on their actions within the group. Do not make sudden, unpredictable movements. Hold your line and help the group stay together and safe.

NO DROP: Most club rides will have a “no drop” policy meaning that no rider will be left behind without his/her permission. Wait at top of hill or next intersection for dropped riders If they are being dropped repeatedly. Do not let a rider that is trying to get back on dangle off the back

DON'T BE RECKLESS:

- Do not cross the yellow line.
- Do not throw bike back when standing.
- Do not engage angry drivers (but do report belligerent and/or dangerous drivers to Police by getting their license plate!)

ZERO TOLERANCE: Riders who break safety rules will be warned ONCE, next time they will be asked to leave the ride. If it happens on two rides in a row they will be asked to leave the club.

MECHANICALS (& FLATS): The group stops until it is fixed or the rider waves you on

ACCIDENTS:

- The group stops
- Take instructions from Ride Leader. If Ride Leader is not at the scene, take instructions from qualified paramedic, first responder, first aider, etc.
- Immediately care for anyone who is injured (911 if necessary)
- Ride Leader to record info by filling out an Incident Report.

INCLEMENT WEATHER:

In the case of inclement weather, please check our Facebook page for a ride update. We do not hold rides in heavy rain, thunder, or lightning. Rides may also be cut short due to poor weather; this will be at the discretion of the Ride Leader or the individual rider.