



SAFETY IN NUMBERS

CAMMERAY ROADIES SAFE GROUP RIDING GUIDE



INTRODUCTION

As a club we get big groups of mixed-ability riders, and it's important that we reconcile the fun, social and relaxed experience of road cycling with the need to be serious and alert to the very real dangers on the road. There are some basic rules and etiquette of group riding that everyone should be aware of when riding with us. These are in place to keep everyone safe.

Whilst safer, riding in a group is fundamentally different to riding on your own. Remember that you are part of a bigger entity when riding in a peloton and you need to adjust your riding and thinking accordingly. Your actions are no longer independent and must be considered as to their impact on the bunch. A peloton is not as simple as an individual and so must approach intersections, lights, hazards, traffic congestion etc. accordingly.





YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A RIDER

Everyone in the group is responsible for the safety of the group and the other riders around them, as well as their own. As a result, as fun as it is, there are very important roles which everyone in the group needs to be actively undertaking at all times.

ALL RIDERS

- Arrive 5 minutes before the noted start time to hear the pre-ride briefing.
- Be aware of the route and any re-group points. *Rides leaves at the nominated start time.*
- Obey the rules of the road.
Always.
- Ride in a predictable and constant manner.
- Hold lines,
especially around corners.
- Maintain consistent speed.
- Do not give in to frustration and take gaps that the rest of the group cannot.
- Avoid sudden or impulsive decision making
- Relay (repeat) calls and hand signals. Immediately. This takes some time to work through the group so relay signals as soon as you hear / see them
- Point out obstacles
- Leave the right distance to the riders in front.
Roughly more than 50cm but less than a 1m between wheels. This is to leave some space for reaction times, but also not to have gaps bigger than 1m which will reduce drafting benefit and cause the group to splinter. Never, ever, overlap wheels with the rider in front.
- Look forward at all times. (Unless checking it's safe to change lanes or at junctions! *Look past the rider directly in front of you to anticipate changes in pace or direction.*)
- Focus on the group, riding, and calls. If you're not capable of multi-tasking, prioritise riding over chatting
- Always be ready to brake, cover your levers at all times in a group. This means you do not use aero bars
- When riding in pairs, ride in line with the person next to you. Handlebar to handlebar.
- Do not 'half-wheel'
- Do your best to keep the group together. Call to "**EASE UP**" if you notice the group splitting or you're struggling to maintain the pace.
- Not brake unless necessary, and always call out to the group when doing so.
- Roll up to stop point as a group with reasonable speed but slow down gently.
- Stopping too abruptly is dangerous and may cause an accident behind.
- Slowing down very slowly and/or attempting track standing leads to a cascade down the group and makes it hard for the riders behind to slow down safely.
- Do not 'filter' to the front of a line of stationary traffic.
- Help less experienced riders to learn group riding techniques and calls. Make all riders feel welcome.



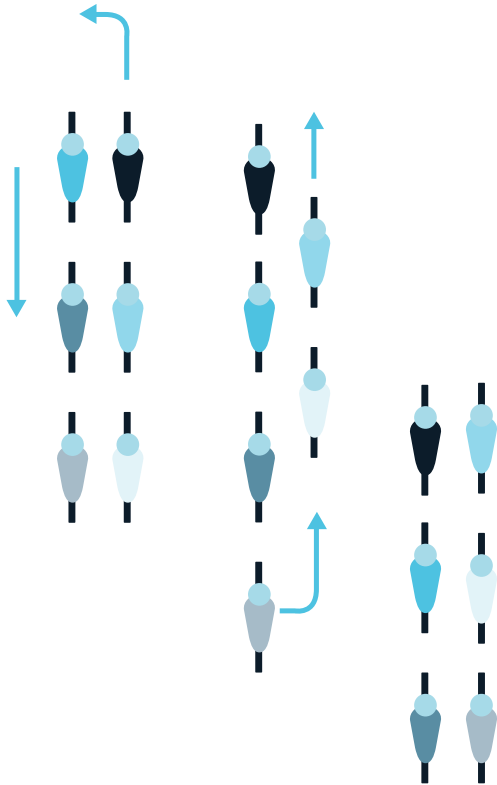
FRONT RUNNERS

- Ride at a constant speed. *Only ever slow down if it's clearly signalled to the group behind first. This includes when you 'ease up' generally on the pace as well as slowing / stopping for obstacles ahead.*
- Remember at all times that there is a long line of riders behind you riding in close proximity at high speed with little time to react. Keep all actions smooth and predictable.
- Ease off from a standing start at a gentle pace until all are clicked in and ready to roll. Do not ride faster than circa 25kph until all are ready.
- Know the route and point out turns well in advance. If you don't know the route, ask or rotate off the front.
- Make the group aware of the need to change lanes *well in advance* of any obstacle such as a parked car or lane ending (see below)
- Make safe judgements for the whole group on whether or not to stop at junctions, roundabouts and traffic lights (see below). Remember that stopping abruptly will cause an accident or near-miss further back in the group.
- Point out all obstacles (even more important than when in the middle of the group)
- Maintain the appropriate pace for the group. Ease up the pace if requested from behind to keep the group together.
- Rotate off in good time to make sure they can maintain the pace for the duration of their turn at the front.

BACK MARKERS

- Make judgements on whether or not it is safe to change lanes (see below)
- Make the call to 'ease up' if they see gaps in the group forming which are not being called by others.
- Call ahead to warn the group of a vehicle behind
- Call ahead ("**ALL ON**") to let the front riders know the group is united.

FORMATION & ROTATION



Generally, the group formation is two abreast, but be aware of the conditions and be courteous to the vehicles we share the road with. In small groups and / or on narrow roads to let vehicles pass, there may be a need to go single file for a period.

Unless otherwise noted by the ride captain prior to the ride, we ride in what we call 'rotating turns'. Effectively there are 2 side-by-side lines of cyclists. When required, either of the front two riders will indicate a 'rotation'. The front-left rider will ease very slightly, and the front-right rider will pull over to the left and take over front-left position. The rider that was second in line on the right pulls up to take over front-right position.

Each rider's turn at the front depends how comfortable they are in holding the pace. Turns usually last 500m - 2km depending on terrain.

VEHICLE BEHIND

Often we ride on roads with few vehicles, especially early in the morning. When this happens, group formation can get relaxed with riders not holding constant lines, etc. When a vehicle approaches from the rear of the group, the riders at the back of the group will call 'CAR BACK' to warn the group that a vehicle will try and pass shortly.

This is a warning to ride cautiously and hold tight formation allowing room for the vehicle to pass. However, in some instances (particularly on narrow roads in a small group) it will be followed by a call of 'SINGLE' to move to single file to allow the vehicle to pass more readily. This call to move to single file will only be made if it is safe to do so.

CALLS & MANOEUVERING

Critical to the safety of group riding is communication amongst the group. In this respect, the front and back positions are the most important positions to be in. If you find yourself here and are new or are aren't comfortable, rotate or switch with someone as soon as is safe.





CHANGING TO SINGLE FILE

At some points the riders at the front may determine a need to break the 'two up' formation and go single file. This may be because there is a parked car in our lane (and the riders at the back have called that we have to HOLD the lane) or because there is a need to let a car pass on a single lane road. In this instance the riders will call 'SINGLE' and raise a single pointed finger.

As soon as it is safe to re-take the lane, the front riders will call 'TWO UP' and standard riding formation resumes.



MOVING LANES

If there is a need to move lanes, the front riders will put up their hands with a clenched fist (see picture), and call "CALL"

It then becomes the back riders responsibility to determine if it's safe to move over.

- If it is safe, the riders at the back first take the lane and then call 'OVER' to all the riders in front - who in turn move over.
- If it is not safe, the riders at the back call 'HOLD' until it is safe to move.

SLOWING GROUP

If the front riders need to slow down this will be called by either 'STOPPING', 'EASING' or (for traffic lights) 'LIGHTS' calls. Usually this is accompanied by a single open palmed hand signal.



SETTING OFF

This will be indicated by 'ROLLING' call. The same call may be used when going through an amber light to indicate that the front riders will not stop. If you're towards the front of the group, remember not to take off too quickly. If you're at the back and believe the group to be rolling slowly until all ready to roll, remember to call "ALL ON" to signify the front riders can get up to normal pace.

MECHANICAL PROBLEM

In the event of a mechanical problem or puncture, the rider should raise their hand (if safe to do so) and call 'MECHANICAL'. The rider and group will pull over to the side of the road as soon as is safe.

PASSING OTHER CYCLISTS / GROUPS

When approaching a slower rider/group, the riders at the front should call out 'RIDERS' to warn the other party of our presence and give the 'Obstruction ahead' signal to the riders behind. Keep the speed consistent and give sufficient space when passing.

OBSTACLES

It's important that we all point out obstacles such as potholes, branches, gravel, or anything that may cause an accident. This is usually indicated by a rider pointing straight down in the direction of the obstacle either side of their bike. If it's not safe to point, obstacles may be warned vocally (such as 'HOLE MIDDLE', 'GLASS LEFT', etc)



TURNING

This will be signalled by the front riders holding a pointed finger straight out in the direction of an upcoming turn. If not safe to point, the riders may simply call out the direction of the turn.

JUNCTIONS & ROUNDABOUTS

Approach all junctions where we do not have right of way by easing up and be ready to stop. This includes roundabouts and traffic lights that may change. The group may need to split if it's a choice between this and a potential accident. Every rider must take responsibility. Just because the riders in front of you have rolled through, it does not necessarily mean it is safe for you to do so.

STOPPING!

Remember to call if your slowing or stopping

CLEAR!

If you can see that it's safe to proceed

CAR!

If not clear call out to warn riders behind

TRAFFIC LIGHTS

We do not run through red lights. When approaching a light that changes to amber the riders at the front will stop only if it's safe to ("STOPPING"). If it is not safe to stop in such a short time call "ROLLING" to let all know that we'll roll through.

The riders at the front will do their best but no-one is perfect. They may forget the size and length of the group behind. If it is not safe to roll through do not do so. Call "STOPPING" and break the group. The front group will pull over as soon as is safe and re-group waiting for the rest.

RELAYING CALLS

One of the most important parts of riding in a group is to relay calls. It's very rarely possible to hear calls from the back when at the front, and vice-versa. We rely on riders relaying calls and hand signals. This means that if, for example, the riders in front of you put up a hand signal to move lanes, repeat that signal. And if the riders behind you call 'HOLD', 'OVER', or anything else, repeat the same call. Similarly, point out obstacles that others point out to you.

CALL CHEAT SHEET

STOPPING

Group slowing, likely to stop

EASING/ SLOWING

Group slowing

LIGHTS

Group slowing to traffic lights

ROLLING

Setting off

CALL

Riders at front requesting if it is safe to move lanes

HOLD

Do not manoeuvre / change lanes

OVER

Safe to manoeuvre / change lanes

SINGLE

Group to switch to single file.

TWO UP

Group to form two-abreast riding formation

IN LEFT

Return to inside lane once an obstacle is passed

CAR BACK

Vehicle behind. Ride cautiously and hold tight formation

PASSING

Vehicle overtaking. Ride cautiously and hold tight formation

EASE UP

Request to slow group pace slightly

ALL ON

Group reformed and ready to roll

MECHANICAL

Rider has a mechanical problem or puncture. Group to ease and pull over where safe

RIDER UP

Cyclist(s) ahead. Overtake to the right

CAR UP

Car ahead. Usually called travelling on narrow roads where car heading in opposite direction may encroach on our lane.

DOOR

Parked car door opening. Leave space

RIDERS

Group of slower cyclists ahead

INSIDE/ CAR LEFT

Indicating there is a car in the inside lane

JUNCTIONS

LEFT/ RIGHT

Used to signal a turn when not safe to signal by hand

CLEAR

Indicates rider believes it safe for riders behind to proceed through junction. This is a guide only, do not blindly follow this call

CAR

Indicates rider in front believes NOT safe to proceed through junction. May be following by abrupt stopping, be careful.

HAND SIGNALS

LANE CHANGE

TO SIGNAL A LANE CHANGE RAISE YOUR FIST & SHOUT "CALL"



"MECHANICAL"

(IF SAFE) RAISE YOUR HAND AND CALL FOR GROUP TO STOP WHEN SAFE



OBSTACLES

TO SIGNAL AN OBSTACLE/HAZARD POINT & CALL WHAT & WHERE IT IS



HAND SIGNALS

OBSTRUCTIONS

SIGNAL UPCOMING
OBSTRUCTIONS BY
POINTING ACROSS YOU
BACK AND CALLING



"SLOWING"

SIGNAL TO OTHER
RIDERS THE NEED
TO SLOW & BE
PREPARED TO STOP



TURNING

SIGNAL A TURN BY
CLEARLY POINTING
IN THE DIRECTION
YOU INTEND TO TURN

