

BUNCH RIDING RULES and ETIQUETTE

Safe bunch riding is a team effort

First and foremost, **obey the law!**

Stop at red lights and at other appropriate times. Running lights runs the risk of accident and serious injury, you may be lucky and get through without incident, but the riders following you may believe it is safe to do so without having the benefit of the field of view you have.

Also, it is not in anyone's interests contributing to aggression on our roads, so let's be safe together!

Key reminders for bunch riding:

- Be consistent and predictable with your actions. Braking suddenly, swerving, jolting motions increases the risk of accidents
- Do not use your mobile phone when riding. If an emergency, pull over and call, or leave the phone for the rest stops.
- IPODS / anything audio - No. Do not wear earphones or any apparatus that may reduce normal traffic noise and riders' calls when bunch riding.
- Lights. Front (white) and rear (red) working. Check battery strength.
- Hand signals. At times hand signals cannot be made by the riders as both hands are required on the handle bars (eg rough roads, tight cornering) In those cases, the rider always makes a clear and loud call.
- Check all attachments to the bike are securely fastened (light fittings, pumps – preferably in the back pocket or better still gas cylinders; bidons and cages are secure)
- Obey the road rules and give drivers the respect you also expect.
- If you brush shoulders, hands or handle bars with a rider, don't panic, or make a sudden direction change. Just roll on and make a slight separation.
- Before stopping for mechanical repairs (eg flat tyre), call "mechanical" and when stopping get completely off the road.
- Ride within your abilities. Don't over-extend in bunch riding.
- Practice. The best method of developing sound bunch riding skills is to ride frequently in bunches and occasionally with different bunches to observe and learn variations.
- Be aware who is in your group. If a rider has dropped off, one or two riders should turn back to check and offer support if needed.
- Dress for the weather conditions and try to keep your body warm throughout the ride and at breaks

Good bunches also look after their riders by:

- Stopping to help fix small mechanical problems and punctures quickly, so that inexperienced riders are not left behind to fend for themselves
- Regrouping after hills or other difficulties to keep everyone together;
- Waiting for the others if the group gets split up by a changing traffic light;
- Helping the less experienced riders with tips and a helping hand when needed;
- Working as a group. For example, the front riders calculate actions for the group as a whole to ride safely not just themselves, and the tail end riders should assist the group negotiate lane changes by acting as the rear turn indicators and signalling when the road is clear of traffic.

What to take for training rides and bunch rides:

- A repair kit including tyre levers, tube repair patches, multi-tool, pump and/or gas cylinders, 2 x new tubes.
- Money, Mobile phone in waterproof case, Contact numbers of fellow riders.
- Identity - drivers licence or contact / address details on laminated paper.

Remember:

- Check out what is happening around and ahead of yourself, don't look at the wheel in front - only the back of the rider & beyond;
- If you are leading the group, act responsibly for the sake of all the riders behind you, not just yourself;
- Welcome new members to the bunch;
- Look after everyone in it by stopping to assist with mechanicals and incidents;
- Ride handle bar to handle bar – width about 1m apart
- Keep a constant distance from the wheel in front.
 - In the dry, keep a gap of 1m - 1.5m;
 - In the wet, keep a gap of approx 3m – 4m
 - Place yourself to maintain a safety run-out directly in front;
- Every rider call and call clearly through the bunch
- When in front, remember you have the responsibility of guiding the whole group who are following along behind you.
- Never overtake a rider on the left hand side
- Be aware of direct and peripheral hazards – good Situational Awareness

Regardless of how experienced you may be as a cyclist, as a bunch rider, or how fit you are and how well you communicate calls and signals, safe bunch riding relies on a highly responsible and organised team effort.