

CAPE COD CYCLING CLUB

Group Ride Rules and Etiquette

We want you to get the most out of your group cycling activities, so take a moment to review the following to help ensure a safe and enjoyable group ride for everyone. Also watch for our quarterly newsletter for discussion of cycling terms and tips on honing your cycling skills.

Hold your line – Do your best to ride along the white shoulder line while trying to keep parallel with that line. Avoid wheel “overlap” and don’t look behind you. This move will cause even the best riders to swerve. Riding three abreast or over the yellow line is dangerous and not permitted on group rides.

Control your speed – Fast accelerations and jerky braking can disrupt the group and cause a crash. If you must drop-back, always do so on the left, and drift slowly back to the end of the line. Brake lightly; momentum can also be slowed by sitting upright to catch the wind on your chest.

Keep eyes and ears open – Watch the road ahead and listen for cars approaching from behind. Signal for hazards like potholes, sand, and cars with a simple hand gesture or verbal cue. Always keep the rider and wheel ahead of you in your peripheral vision and alert riders behind if you are slowing or stopping.

Obey all motor vehicle traffic laws – Cyclists are bound by law to adhere to all motor vehicle traffic laws, including stop signs, traffic lights, rotaries, etc. All riders in a group should come to a complete stop (i.e., “foot-down”) at stop signs.

Be responsible – Even if you don’t know how to change a flat, you should be prepared with the equipment and tools you need so someone can assist you. Arrive to ride locations early enough so that you are ready to go at the prescribed time.

Be respectful – All of your actions reflect not only on our club, but on cyclists in general. A smile and a wave will go a long way if a driver has had to wait for the group to “roll-through.” Make suggestions to other riders in a positive, constructive manner. And, above all, don’t expectorate (spit or “snot rocket”) when other riders are too close!

*** Advanced Guidelines ***

Drafting – Drafting is using the windbreak from another rider to lessen your effort. Follow as close as you are comfortable, typically a few inches to 2-3 ft. If you cannot maintain the draft with the pace, allow others to pass before the gap is too large to bridge. Don’t be afraid to take your turn pulling at the front of the group. Not all riders are equal, but taking your turn will share the hard work, earn respect, and make you stronger!

Pace lines – Pace lines keep the group's speed consistently higher than any single member of the group could maintain on his or her own. This efficiency is possible because it is as much as 30% easier to ride in the draft. Three basic rules in a pace line:

1. Keep your speed steady when you are “out front.”
2. When you are finished pulling, pull off to the side into the wind
3. Once you move off the front, slow down and catch on to the wheel of the last rider.

Aero-bars – While you may ride a bike with aero bars in a group ride, you **may not** ride on the bars unless you are at the front of a pace line or have dropped back and are trying to catch your group. Aero positioning offers far less control and much slower braking time than traditional positioning.