

Group Riding Etiquette

1. **Be Predictable** — for other cyclists AND motorist. Hold line, maintain speed, communicate with other riders, signal to cars, etc. If you ride unpredictably you are a hazard to yourself and everyone else who rides with you.
2. **Don't Overlap Wheels** — There is no recovery from a front wheel deflection. All it takes is for the person in front to move sideways a few inches...if someone is overlapping his wheel, that someone will go down along with practically everyone who is behind him.
3. **Be Steady** — This includes speed and line. Don't accelerate when you take the lead, ride a straight line, and maintain speed constant with the conditions. Control spacing by using body position NOT the brakes.
4. **Announce Hazards** — When you are in the lead, you are responsible for the safety of everyone behind you. Be very vocal, point out hazards with hand signals. Riders in the pack should relay these warnings to the rear.
5. **Signal** — Signaling lets everyone (vehicles and riders) know your intentions...remember #1? One note here, use your right arm straight out to signal a right turn. Also, vocalize changes in direction or speed — especially in a large group: “Slowing!” or “Right turn!”.
6. **Don't Fixate** — If you are staring at something (i.e., the wheel in front of you), eventually you'll hit it! Relax, look around, stay alert.
7. **Stay Off Aero Bars** — They are much too unstable to be used in the pack. One exception...when you are at the front pulling.
8. **Don't Leave Stragglers** — If you get separated at intersections the lead group should soft pedal until the rest have rejoined. No one should be left alone on a group ride.
9. **Know Your Limitations** — If you're not strong enough or too tired to take a turn at the front, stay near the back or take a short turn in the lead. Also, don't pull at the front faster and longer than you have energy to get back in at the rear
10. **Change Positions Correctly** — A common beginner *faux pas* is to stop pedaling just before pulling off the front. This creates an accordion effect toward the rear. Keep a steady pressure on the pedals until you have cleared the front.
11. **Climbing** — If you need to stand, shift up a gear to compensate for the slower cadence and stand up smoothly keeping a steady pressure on the pedals. This will keep you from moving backward relative to the rider behind you. Apply the opposite technique when changing to a sitting position.
12. **Descending** — If you are leading, keep pedaling. If you don't, everyone behind you will eat your lunch.
13. **Relax** — This one is really important. It will allow you to be smooth and responsive. You can bet that if you see someone who is riding a straight line and is very steady, he/she is relaxed on the bike.