



Ride Participant Guide 2024

Overview

Please ensure to read and understand all policies and procedures before you ride.

Obey the Ride Leader

- They have been briefed on the rules of the road
- Do not stay on a ride in which you don't feel comfortable
- Before leaving a ride, make sure to tell a ride leader or co-leader

Ride Formations

- Group size: no more than 20 riders
- Formations we ride:
 - Social Paceline (Double): Efficient for motorists to pass.
 - Single Paceline: For when the road is busy and space for Double Paceline is limited. Be sure to split into groups no larger than 10 for these parts to allow easy passing.

Share the Road

- You are a club ambassador on the road
- Be courteous to other road users
- Help motorists pass when safe to do so
- Give a “thumbs up” and wave thanks to courteous drivers
- Be careful not to startle other road users – call out “on your left” before passing

Obey the Highway Traffic Act (HTA)

- Under the HTA, a bicycle is a vehicle, just like a car or truck
- Cyclists:
 - Must obey all traffic laws
 - Have the same rights and responsibilities as drivers
 - Must stop at all stop signs
 - Must pull over to the right and stop for emergency vehicles
- We ride “tight to the right”, in a straight line and pass on the left
 - “tight to the right” means within a foot of the edge of the road, the shoulder of the rider beside you while staying close to the rider in front of you.
 - Do not overlap wheels
- Lights are required within 30 minutes of dusk or dawn and poor visibility conditions (fog or rain) but recommended always (no flashing lights in group)
 - White light on the front
 - Red solid on the back

Rider Guidelines

Please ensure to read and understand all policies and procedures before you ride.

- Helmets are mandatory any time while on the bike
- Bike must be in safe working order with 2 proper working brakes
- Front and rear lights are recommended
- Arrive before the start time, leave on time
- No water bottles made of hard materials, i.e. hard plastic, aluminum, etc.”
- Remove all TT/TRI bars for group rides
- No mirrors beyond the width of handlebars
- E-bikes must not have a throttle
- Be self-sufficient, bring your own:
 - Water & food
 - Money, cell phone, ID, membership card (digital or printed)
 - Spare tube, pump/CO₂, repair kit
- Zero tolerance
 - Riders who break safety rules will be asked to leave the ride and may be susceptible to disciplinary action by the Peterborough Cycling Club.
- Etiquette
 - We operate as a single unit on group rides, i.e. “Bar to Bar” on flats, hills, descents and at stops
 - Move completely off the road when stopping
 - Every member has a “duty of care” to all members
 - Hold your line. Be predictable and stay in your allocated spot.
 - Never brake suddenly.
 - Never allow your front wheel to overlap the rear wheel of the rider ahead of you
 - Please see our [Code of Conduct](#) on the PCC website
- Share the Road
 - Be kind, make it easy for others to pass if it’s safe to do so
 - Do not engage with angry drivers, allow the ride leader to handle the situation
 - Report belligerent and/or dangerous drivers to the Police
 - Do not cross the yellow line ever
 - Do not cut off other cyclists when changing your line
 - Do not throw your bike back when standing up to climb



- **Railway Crossing**
 - Always cross tracks at a right angle (do a shoulder check for traffic first)
 - Reduce speed before crossing. Communicate within group that there are tracks ahead and a speed change.
 - Tracks are very slippery when wet
 - Use hand signal for tracks
- **Competitive Ride**
 - Only sprint at known safe spots, with clear lines of sight. NO following or approaching traffic
- **Accidents**
 - The group stops, completely off the road.
 - Care for anyone who is injured (call 911 if necessary)
 - Ride Leaders are to follow the Emergency Action Plan
 - Please see our **Concussion Policy** on the PCC website
- **Weather**
 - We cancel rides if there is a severe weather warning or lightning
 - Check the forum and Cycle Club App for current ride information
 - Use common sense: decide when it is safe to ride
 - Please see our **Weather Policy** on the PCC website
- **Group stops (mechanicals, emergency vehicles, regroup, or snacks)**
 - Stop clear of any intersections
 - Right line of the paceline stops first
 - Left line of the paceline is to pass and then stop
 - Reduce speed in a controlled manner
 - Move completely off of the road
- **Passing**
 - Always call out “on your left”
 - Ride single file when passing another group of cyclists
 - Do not cut in front of a rider you have passed – ease back in the lane when clear

How we Ride

Please ensure to read and understand all policies and procedures before you ride.

We use two methods to rotate cyclists within a basic “tight and to the right” formation. These methods are referred to as the Social Paceline and Single Paceline. The Ride Leader will call out the appropriate formation for the needs of the group. Although it is always important to accommodate the needs of other road users, this must never be done in a way that compromises safety.

Group Riding

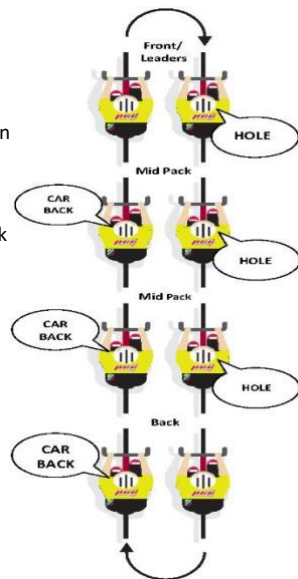
- Riding with a group saves each individual rider’s energy. You can ride longer and faster than riding alone.
- A group is more visible than an individual cyclist on the road.
- Riding with a group will improve your riding skills and performance.
- Group riding is fun, social and you can make a lot of good friends.
- Pacelines do have some inherent danger and require communication among the riders.
- All passes are to be done smoothly and gently like flowing water, no surging

Roles in Formations

- **Front-** Maintain constant pedaling efforts, call and signal turns well in advance, ensure no half-wheeling, ride bar to bar and tight to the right, indicate debris, railway crossings, stop signs, etc.
- **Middle** - Stay alert and responsive to signals from the front. Pass information from lead riders back and vice versa. Look ahead up the line and keep your eye on the back of rider in front of you; do not watch their rear wheel.
- **Back** – Monitor upcoming traffic from behind. Stay alert and responsive to signals from the front. Look ahead up the line and keep your eye on the back of riders in front of you; do not watch their rear wheel. Indicate left turns and lane changes. Ensure no one is left behind. If riders are at risk of being dropped call out “easy” so speed can be adjusted. Relay messages to the riders ahead, i.e. “car back”, “mechanical”, etc.

Unacceptable formations

- Too long - single-file lines can be difficult for vehicles to pass
 - Motorists will be tempted to squeeze by when it is not safe
 - Communication is difficult between cyclist in a long single-file line, often resulting in a “snaking” line which draws riders into traffic
- Rotating Double Paceline (not the Social Paceline) is only permitted on competitive rides
- Diagonal echelon



If you hear something happen behind you (rider crash or mechanical problem), do not turn around suddenly. Keep riding forward looking ahead until it is safe to stop and pull over.

Single Paceline

Please ensure to read and understand all policies and procedures before you ride.

At times, road traffic or conditions may deem it necessary to ride in a single-file line. The ride leader will determine when roads are safer to travel in single file.

When “single-up” is called out and signaled by the ride leader:

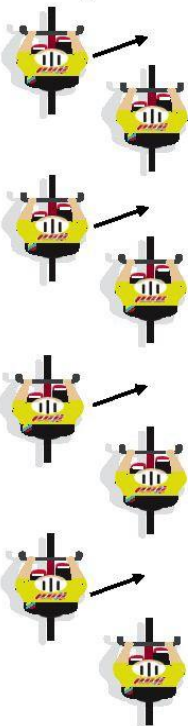
- The left rider should tuck in safely ahead of the right rider all the way down the line
- Riders on the left side of the Social Paceline will move forward and ahead of their partners.
- Should take 10 seconds
- Resist the temptation to increase the intensity. This is a major cycling faux pas!
- Riders line up directly behind the rider in front

How to Rotate in a Single Paceline

- The front rider maintains a constant effort for a short period of time (from several seconds to several minutes) and then signals to the rider behind, by flicking his or her right elbow that he or she is rotating off the front.
- After ensuring there is no following or oncoming traffic, the front rider slowly steers to the left of the paceline, slows down and drifts to the back safely without unnecessary time spent beside the group. The rider assuming the front position must maintain the established speed.
- Resist the temptation to increase the intensity. This is a major cycling faux pas!

Although it is always important to accommodate the needs of other road users, this must never be done in a way that compromises safety

When single file is called



Social Paceline

Please ensure to read and understand all policies and procedures before you ride.

This is our standard rotation used on all rides with the exception of competitive rides.

- The social paceline keeps riders in two-abreast formation.
- It has two leading riders breaking the wind and setting the pace.
- Lead rider on the left (#1), after a reasonable period of time i.e. 1-5 minutes (or less if not feeling comfortable, it's flexible), asks the cyclist on their right to "rotate".
 - Flicks their right elbow to indicate the rotation.
- Riders will continue to rotate until riders 2 & 3 are at the front.
- Lead left rider (#1) will gently ride forward and fade right, making sure that his or her rear wheel is clear before they fade right.
- The left rider from the second row (#2) will then gently ride forward at a similar pace as to what has already been set and fade right ending up in front of #1. Make sure that your rear wheel is clear before you fade right.
- In turn, the left side of the group will continue to gently advance forward to the front of the group beside the right line.
- Those two new riders, #2 & 3, will now lead the group for however long they feel comfortable.
- All passes are to be done smoothly and gently like flowing water— no surging.
- Call "clear" to the rider fading right when safe to do so.
- Call "last wheel" to back rider when rotating through.



Call Outs

Please ensure to read and understand all policies and procedures before you ride.

All riders are expected to communicate hazards to others, both verbally and with hand signals.

Never remove your hands from the bars at the risk of your own safety.

“Call Outs” should be made clearly for riders who are behind or in front to hear and pass on. All riders are responsible for helping the call-outs get passed through the group by repeating it for the person behind them. Yelling loudly, “Carr...HOLE....Grave!!!” is unproductive as all that can be heard is, “BLURRRR!” Suddenly the majority of the riders are looking around wondering what was just called – is it a car, a hole, a flat? Hand signals should 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. Do not assume that the riders behind you or in front of you heard the call out or saw the hand signal. Always repeat it. Be sure to only call out items that pose as a potential hazard to the rest for the group.

- **“Slowing”** – indicates that you or the group is slowing in pace, so all riders should stop pedaling, 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. The group should gear down and stop pedaling. Riders at the back should start breaking right away and riders towards the front should initially brake very gently. Move completely off the road when stopping to chat, fix a flat, etc...
- **“Car back”** – indicates that there is a car(s) approaching from the rear of the group.
- **“Car up”** – indicates that there is a car(s) approaching from the front of the group.
- **“Car left/right”** – indicates that there is a car(s) at the intersection that might cross your path.
- **“Gravel” or “Glass”** – indicates that riders need to be cautious and avoid the gravel or glass on the road.
- **“Right turn” or “Left turn”** – indicates that the group will be turning.
- **“Road kill”** – self-explanatory. Pointing to the side of the obstacle or calling on left or right.
- **“Single up”** – indicates single file formation is necessary.
- **“Double file”** – indicates it’s safe to ride back in social pace line, please get into double formation.
- **“Hole”** – indicates that riders need to be cautious and avoid pothole(s).
- **“Tracks”** – indicates that riders need to be cautious of the railway tracks coming up.
- **“Easy”** – indicates that riders need to gradually decrease the speed 1 or 2 km/hr.



- **“On your left”** – indicates that you are passing or coming up their left.
- **“Runner/Walker/Bike up”** – indicates that there is a runner, walker or cyclist ahead of the group on the road or side of the road.
- **“Flat or Mechanical”**- indicates that riders need to slow and pull over to the right and completely off the road to assist with the mechanical.
- **“Clear”** – indicates that you approached an intersection, looked in all directions and there is no traffic. This means it is safe for you and the rider behind to clear the intersection.
- **“Standing”** – indicates that you need to anticipate the climbing rider ahead of you rising out of the saddle, as their bike may “go backwards” when they stand out of their saddle.



Hand Signals

Please ensure to read and understand all policies and procedures before you ride.

When pointing obstacles out never remove your hands from the bars at the risk of your own safety.



LEFT TURN
Arm out straight and pointing in the direction of turn.



STOPPING
Arm bent, palm flat facing behind you, finger splayed.



SLOWING
Wave/pulse one hand as if patting a dog.



RIGHT TURN
Arm out straight and pointing in the direction of turn.



TRACKS
Two fingers waved or held behind your back indicates upcoming train tracks.



MOVING IN
Let the rider know you're moving in on their line.



HAZARD
Pointing to pot hole or hazard that needs to be avoided. Accompanied with call of "hole" (or appropriate call out).



GRAVEL
Indicate glass or loose gravel by shaking your hand, palm down on the side where the hazard is.



OBSTACLES
Arm outstretched beside your glute, hand fanning away a bad smell. Alerts everyone to get over for parked cars, obstacles, traffic or riders.



ROTATION
Flick the elbow to signal the next rider to pull.



SINGLE FILE
One finger raised overhead to indicate single file formation is necessary.



DOUBLE FILE
Two fingers raised overhead to indicates to return to social pace line.

Riding Two Abreast & the Law

Please ensure to read and understand all policies and procedures before you ride.

While the Highway Traffic Act (HTA) is not perfect when it comes to cycling and Ontario highways, it must be understood that no piece of legislation can anticipate and predetermine all actions in all circumstances. Like the old saying goes, “You can’t please all of the people all of the time”. The solution to these inevitable voids in the law is common sense. Years ago, the Province created the concept of Defensive Driving practices to address the deficiencies in the HTA. It was not based on the law but on common sense, and these Defensive Driving practices have proven to be very successful for drivers through the years.

‘Properly executed’ two-abreast cycling has been used internationally for over half a century as a legitimate Defensive Cycling technique. While two-abreast cycling may be new to many Canadian drivers and cyclists, it’s both common place and accepted without question in Europe where cycling is a traditional sport. We are seeing improvements in North America where more and more progressive States are specifically accepting and defining the terms of two-abreast cycling in their highway traffic acts.

In Ontario, two-abreast cycling is not defined nor acknowledged but neither is it prohibited in the HTA. A cyclist may ride six abreast if there are no other faster vehicles approaching. The confusion comes into play when another faster vehicle approaches. Section 148(2) of the HTA suggests that the slower vehicles move to the right to allow the faster moving vehicles to go past. In other words, the slower vehicle should not impede or obstruct a faster vehicle from passing. Some may interpret this to mean that all cyclists riding two abreast should shift to single file when any and all faster vehicles approach. Experienced cyclists will tell you it is unrealistic to expect that a double paceline should transition into a single file for EVERY passing car. It simply does not need to be done. In our normal context, which is riding on low traffic roads at low traffic times, mostly all faster vehicles pass easily without being obstructed by a double paceline. In those rare moments when we find ourselves in a position that a double paceline could impede the progress of faster traffic, we should go into a single file formation until such time that the traffic has cleared.

What we are trying to do within the PCC is define and propagate a Defensive Cycling practice that provides a common-sense approach that accommodates both cyclists and drivers. We believe that an accommodation can exist if we all accept the following principles:

1. Accept that two-abreast cycling in and of itself does not run afoul of the HTA in mostly all situations while cycling;
2. Riding two-abreast is a legitimate and responsible Defensive Cycling practice;
3. As an organized cycling club, we ride our double pacelines in a manner that greatly reduces the possibility that they may obstruct traffic (i.e. ‘Tight and to the Right’).
4. We as a cycling club will go into single-file on those occasions that we are legitimately obstructing faster moving traffic but never in a way that compromises cyclist safety.