



# How to Plan a Group Ride



Riding as a group is a great way to build community and help those who are less experienced with bicycling build confidence on the road. On the following pages, you will find more information about how to make the group ride a great experience for all.

## Consider the following before planning your route:

- What kind of experience do you want to create for your riders?
- How many riders are you planning for?
- What level of experience do your participants have?
- Do you have a specific trail, landmark, or area in mind?
- Will you incorporate food, treats, or drinks?
- Is there another activity that you would like to incorporate with the ride?
- Do you have a theme?
- Day of the week: What days work best for your participants?
- Date: Does it conflict with any other major events? Do you have enough time?
- Start time: Is the Metro running? Are you conflicting with work or church?
- End time: Will it be dark? Will folks be hungry?
- Start location: is it accessible? Is there enough space to gather?
- End location: what will people do with their bikes? Are they near their cars?

## Design and Test Your Route

- Mapping: Use google maps or Ride With GPS for simple, sharable mapping.  
Be sure to incorporate:
  - Bathroom stops
  - Bike lanes, paths, wide roads, or roads with two lanes
  - Meetup points every 10 miles
  - Fun discoveries and scenery!
- Avoid:
  - Busy roads
  - Highways/on- ramps
  - major pedestrian areas
  - construction zones
  - unsafe conditions
  - Left turns
  - Bus corridors
- Cue Sheets: Use them for rides where you will likely get split up and are relying on ride marshals.
- Test ride your route before making it public to ensure the safety of all riders.

## Volunteer roles to consider:

- Bike Marshals: volunteers who ensure ride participants are safe and feel supported
- Bike Mechanic: carry tools and be prepared to fix flats
- Bike Tour Guides: ensure folks stay on route and stay engaged.
- Promoter: help promote the ride and draw enthusiasm
- Greeter: sign in riders, give the rundown, help with the start
- Photographer: designate someone or you'll never see photos!

## Rider Formation:

Lead: Knows the route like the back of their hand, adjusts pace according to the group's needs, communicates stopping, starting, turning, and knows to obey the rules and stop the group at stop lights.

Floater: Keeps the group together, in one lane or in-line, stops to help with bike issues, and helps communicate messages between the sweeper and the lead.

Sweeper: Ensures that no person gets left behind and communicates messages with the floater.

## Do's & Don'ts of Group Rides

### Do's

- Be courteous to pedestrians, trail-users, and other bicyclist
- Use visible and verbal cues
- Leave safe distance between riders
- Stop and wait if the group is separated
- Help with bike issues
- Encourage others to ride safely
- Smile and wave to passersby
- Talk to new people and make friends

### Don'ts:

- Don't break the law
- Don't run stop signs or lights
- Don't ride two abreast when unsafe
- Don't block traffic

## Day-of Mock Schedule

**9:00am:** Pick up materials and load up transportation  
**10:00 am:** In transit to ride start  
**11:00 am:** Arrive at ride start and begin setup  
**11:30 am:** Volunteer huddle (set expectations and say thank you for volunteering)  
**12:00 pm:** Riders arrive; check-in  
**12:20pm:** Safety speech  
**12:35pm:** Head out  
**1:45pm:** Halfway point: PHOTO!  
**3:00pm:** Head back  
**4:00pm:** Head home

## Miscellaneous Considerations

- What's your plan if someone gets hurt?
- What's your foul weather plan?
- Is there a skill you'd like to emphasize?
- How will you recap the event?
- Will you have riders sign a waiver?
- What if someone shows up without a helmet?
- Always pack extra snacks and water
- If it's cold bring extra gloves and weather gear