

Things you should know when riding with Shawnee Trail Cycling Club

Group rides are a wonderful way of cycling with others. Riding etiquette and common courtesies apply to all group rides regardless of the number of riders, the distance or the pre-determined pace. It is expected that cyclists maintain the ride pace, follow the rules of the rode and communicate with the universal verbal cues and hand signals.

Shawnee Trail Cycling Club would like to ensure the safety of all cyclists attending our group rides. We have assembled some information to make sure you are prepared for your ride and can help make these rides enjoyable and safe for yourself and others.

- Be punctual.
 - The group shouldn't have to wait for you.
 - Arrive at the ride start with your gear and equipment ready to ride
 - Arrive early enough to repair a flat or perform minor adjustments.
- Be prepared.
 - Your bike should be in good mechanical shape, your tires inflated to the proper pressure and your water bottles filled.
 - Your flat fix bag should have a spare tube, patch kit, tire levers and an inflation device.
 - If you don't know how to fix a flat, take a class or ask someone who knows how if they will teach you.
- Be responsible.
 - Emergency contact information, medical alerts and personal identification should be kept in your flat fix bag.
 - ICE (I.C.E) If something happens on the ride and you need emergency medical attention, other riders should be able to get to that info easily. A common practice used by cyclists and runners is that of storing your emergency phone and contact information on your cell with the identification of ICE (In Case of Emergency). Paramedics and medical professionals know to look for this, along with all Shawnee Trail Cycling Club Ride Leaders. Alternatively, carry your contact information in a secure bag easily accessible by Ride Leaders and medical personnel.
 - Additionally, wearing a Road ID is an excellent way to provide immediate information in case of an accident.
 - If there is a sign-in sheet at the ride, be sure to get your name and emergency phone number written down before joining the ride.
 - Helmets are required on ALL RIDES
 - Make sure your helmet fits well, is correctly adjusted and doesn't have any damage.
 - Helmets should be replaced every few years even if they haven't been crashed and should be replaced immediately if they have.

Show your respect for other cyclists and the drivers with whom we share the road. A smile and a wave go a long way if a driver has waited for a cyclist to get through an intersection. Say hello to other cyclists on the road as you pass. We are kindred spirits, connected by our passion. Oh yeah, never spit when other riders are too close behind you.

A Quick Read

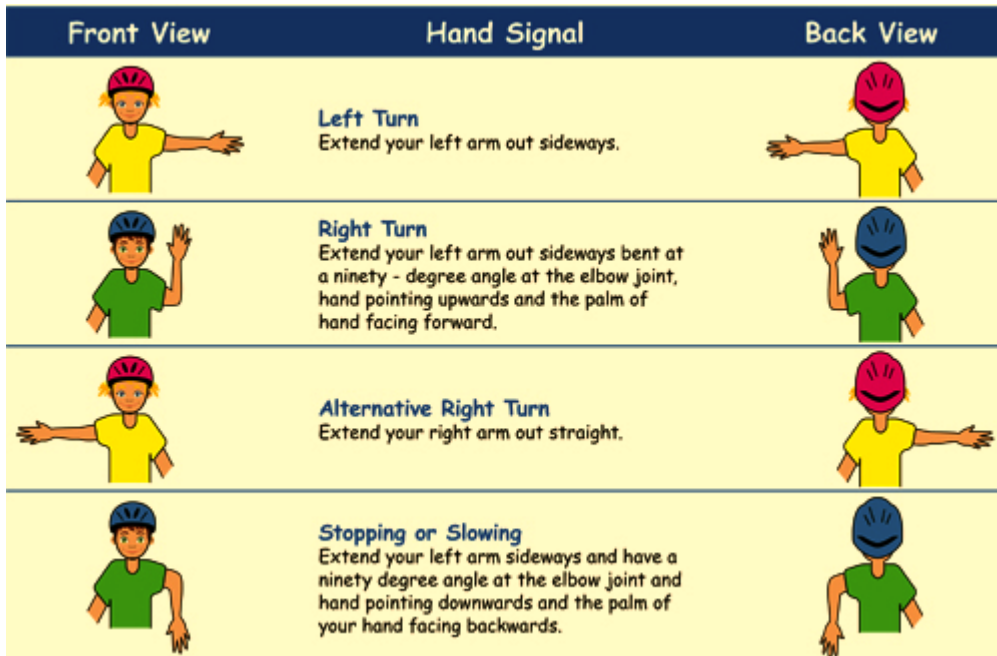
1. Obey all traffic signs and signals.
2. Communicate with your fellow riders, using proper cycling terms.
3. Stay to the right, except to pass. Pass on the left side only.
4. **Do not cross center line regardless of passing zone.**
5. Use proper signals when turning. Make left turns from the center of the road or left turn lane. Cross railroad tracks at right angles.
6. Ride in control of your bike at all times (i.e. being able to stop within a reasonable distance.)
7. Ride defensively, in consideration of your fellow riders.
8. **In a group ride, NEVER...**
 - a. use Aero bars.
 - b. use earphones of any kind.
 - c. overlap wheels. A slight direction change or gust of wind could easily cause you to touch wheels and fall.
 - d. pass on the right.
 - e. Ride more than two abreast
9. Point out and call out any road hazards ahead. These include potholes, drain grates, stray animals, opening car doors, sticks or stones, parked cars, etc.
10. Pedal downhill when you are at the front of the group. Cyclists dislike having to ride under brakes.
11. When climbing hills, avoid following a wheel too closely. Many riders often lose their momentum when rising out of the saddle on a hill which can cause a sudden deceleration. This can often catch a rider who is following too closely, resulting in a fall from a wheel touch.
12. When leading the group, maintain the advertised pace. Don't take the lead if you don't know the route.
13. Carry personal identification with you at all times.
14. **Follow the instructions of Ride Leaders.** Ride Leaders are riders designated by STCC who assist with rider safety and communication along the route. The Ride Leaders should identify themselves at the beginning of each ride.

In Depth

In the cycling community, there are commonly used verbal cues, hand signals and respectful rider behavior. If you are a new rider or your riding is done mostly solo, you may be unaware of these acceptable methods of communication and predictable riding. The following is a primer on the do's and don'ts of cycling etiquette.


- **Safety is the number one priority.**
 - Riding predictably is the best way to make safety a reality. When other road users can anticipate your next move, you go a long way toward ensuring everyone's safety.
- **"Same roads, Same rules, Same rights, Same responsibilities".**
 - Bicycles are considered motor vehicles and are beholden to all the same laws of the road. We have the right to use the roads and are obligated to obey all the rules. For example, when making a left-hand turn, you must get in the left hand lane, signal your intentions and turn when clear. Even on a multi-lane road. This is predictable behavior and the safest way to ride.
 - Whenever possible, make eye contact with drivers so you know they acknowledge your presence.
 - Remember that you "share the road" with motorized vehicles and are required by law to follow the same traffic rules and ordinances.
- **Stay in control of your bike at all times.**
 - Releasing both hands from the handlebars or hopping the bike over objects in the road, for example, can cause a dangerous loss of control.
 - Riding on your aerobars, is not acceptable on a group ride as you are less in control of your bike when steering with your forearms.
 - You're even less in control when steering with no arms, so keep those hands on the bars, please!
- **Ride defensively and with a group mentality.**
 - If an intersection is only clear for a moment, don't lead the group to believe it is safe to go across. Try not to do anything that wouldn't be in the group's best interest. Be aware of what's around you and have a plan for what to do in any circumstance.
 - A cyclist should ride as far to the right as possible barring parked cars, gravel and those pesky drainage grates being in your path. A good gauge is to ride approximately 3 feet from the right side of the road, about where the marks are for the right tires of a car.
 - When passing other riders, do so on the left. If you are a slower rider, move to the right so others can safely pass you.
 - Riders should never cross the yellow median lines into the lane of oncoming traffic.



- Communication is very important on group rides.
 - Hand Signals are generally used by those leaders of a ride to indicate obstacles and upcoming actions to be taken by the group. Hand signals should ALWAYS be done with the arm held to the right or left. Do not hold your hand against your back to signal slowing, stopping or debris. This gives others in the group beyond the person directly behind you notice of the upcoming event. It is also more visible to following vehicles. Common signals you'll encounter on our rides are:




- **Verbal Communications** should be used in conjunction with **hand signals**. Hand signals should be avoided if you are riding in the middle of a group – causing instability and maybe crashes. *It is important that members of the group **repeat** these calls so others know that you are aware of the warnings. It is also common courtesy to repeat this so that others behind and in front of you are also aware.*

Verbal Command	Description	Hand Signal
Biker Up	Similar to "Car Up", this indicates that one or more cyclists are coming towards the group.	None
Biker Down	Not something we ever want to hear, but it does happen occasionally. Yelling "biker down", tells the rest of the group there has been an accident. The group will stop to render assistance, including calling for medical care if needed.	None
Car Back	When someone yells, "Car Back", this means that there is a car coming up from behind. It is intended to be a verbal caution indicating that a stop may be necessary. If you hear this, repeat the call so that others know that you are aware of the vehicle is behind you. It is also common courtesy to repeat this so that others behind you also know about the car.	None

Car Left	Usually announced when coming up to an intersection and gives an indication that vehicle is approaching the intersection from the left. Cyclists should always use additional volume with this command as it is as much for the approaching vehicle as it is for the group. <i>Riders should always use caution with an approaching vehicle – even if there is a stop sign, it doesn't mean the vehicle will actually stop.</i>	<i>None</i>
Car Right	Usually announced when coming up to an intersection and gives an indication that vehicle is approaching the intersection from the right. . Cyclists should always use additional volume with this command as it is as much for the approaching vehicle as it is for the group. <i>Riders should always use caution with an approaching vehicle – even if there is a stop sign, it doesn't mean the vehicle will actually stop.</i>	<i>None</i>
Car Up	When someone yells, "Car Up", this means that there is a car approaching the group from the front. It is intended to be a verbal caution indicating that a stop may be necessary. This is also especially helpful to cyclists behind you that may be riding two-up on single lane roads. If you hear this, proceed with caution and "single up" if possible.	<i>None</i>
Clear	Announced when entering an intersection or other area where you may encounter vehicles, other bikes or pedestrians. Treat this command as "information only". You should always view the area yourself to ensure nothing has changed as you approach the area.	<i>None</i>
Dog	When someone yells "dog", all cyclists in the group should be prepared for an encounter with one of our furry friends.	
Debris	If you see an obstacle such as a hole or glass that might endanger another rider behind you, it is important to call it out or motion for riders to move out of the way.	
Gap	Announcing "Gap" when you are on a group ride indicates to those in front that the group is breaking apart and some cyclists are being dropped. This is especially important on group rides where the leader wishes to keep the group together. The ride leader can choose to slow the pace allowing the gapped rider to catch up, or the group sweeper can go back to assist.	<i>None</i>
Going Left	Warns the group of an upcoming left hand turn.	

Going Right	Warns the group of an upcoming turn to the right.	
Green Up	Yelling "Green Up" when a group is at a stoplight, tells the group that the light has turned green and the group is proceeding.	<i>None</i>
Hold your line	When someone yells, "Hold your line", this means that you need to stay in a straight line as best you can. In most cases, the person yelling this out to you is attempting to pass. If you swing out or if you don't keep your bike steady, you could cause the other cyclist trouble.	<i>None</i>
Hole!	Normally accompanied by a hand signal pointing to the hole, this warns the riders behind that an obstruction is coming up and should be avoided.	
Mechanical	Yelling "mechanical" indicates to the rest of the group that a rider has a problem with their bike. This could be a flat or something more serious.	<i>None</i>
On your left	When someone yells, "On your Left", this means that they are passing you on your left. No need to take this personally. Let them pass as they have the right of way. You should never hear "On your Right". That is, a cyclist should never pass on the right. However, there are many cyclists with varying experience. Be on the look out for those that will pass on your right. If someone does this, kindly remind him or her that they should pass on the left. Also, it is common courtesy to say "Thank You" to the person yelling "on your left". This indicates to them that you've heard them.	<i>None</i>
Ready to Roll	Warning from the front of the group that a light is about to turn green and to prepare to move. This reduces delay from the group and helps them traverse the intersection quickly and safely.	<i>None</i>
Rolling	Announced from the front of the group as it is safe for the group to move forward from being stopped. This generally is at a stop sign, but can occur anywhere the group has had to stop.	<i>None</i>
Runner/Walker Right	Warning to riders in the group that a walker or jogger is coming towards the group and the group should shift to the left to avoid.	
Single Up	When this announcement is made, all riders should get into single file formation.	
Slowing	When someone yells out "Slowing", this means that there is something that is causing the group to slow down. This can be anything from a light, a slower group of bikes, a car up ahead. In any event, prepare to slow down. Tap	

	your brakes and repeat the yell "Slowing". This is to indicate to others that you've heard them and you are also slowing. This will also alert those behind you that you are slowing down.	
Stopping	When someone yells out "Stopping", this means that there is something that is causing the group to stop. This can be anything from a light, a slower group of bikes, a stop sign or a car up ahead. In any event, prepare to stop. Tap you brakes and repeat the yell "Stopping". This is to indicate to others that you've heard them and you are also slowing to a stop. This will also alert those behind you that you are slowing to a stop. It's VERY important not to slam on your brakes especially if there are others behind you!!	
Take the Lane	When a group is required to change lanes, it is expected that those in the back of the group, with the best view of traffic approaching from the read, should clear the lane first. They should announce "Take the Lane", which all riders should pass to the front of the group. Shawnee Trail Cycling Club uses this, rather than "Clear" or "Clear Back" because of the confusion with the word "Car" in our Texas wind.	<i>None</i>
Tracks	Yelling "tracks" tells riders in the group to be aware the group is about to cross railroad tracks. Always cross tracks at a right angle.	