

SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR LHC

RIDING SAFELY

1. Use **appropriate hand signals** for turning and stopping. This helps both riders and drivers.
2. **Helmets must always be worn.** The helmet should sit evenly on the head, cover the forehead, and rest just above the eyebrows and fit securely, even with winter headgear on. One way to test the fit is to hold the helmet in place and try to turn your head from side to side. Next, try to tip your head up and down. You should have very little movement (less than an inch).
3. **Ride with traffic.**
4. **Point out and call out obstacles** and hazards in the road to the riders behind you.
5. **Bright or reflective clothing** and/or lights increase one's visibility.
6. **Maintain your bicycle** in a safe condition.
7. **Never wear head phones.**
8. It is recommended all riders **use either a helmet/glasses mirror** or have one on the handlebars.
9. **Don't wave cars to pass.** Let them make the decision when it is safe.
10. If there is a right hand turn lane, and you are going straight, position yourself in a visible spot in the through-traffic lane.
11. If there is no right turn lane, be sure you are visible to any car that might turn to the right in front of you.
12. Be aware of side traffic. Position yourself in a visible part of the lane, not so far to the right as to be obscured by parked cars.

GROUP RIDING

1. Unless specifically stated otherwise, **all rides are "no drop" rides.** Every member should **carry a cell phone** and have most, if not all, phone numbers of other group members **and their spouses** (in case of an emergency).
2. While it is seldom required by law, **ride single file when traffic is present.** Don't needlessly block the road, even if you have the legal right to. (The exception to this may be when a rider knows another car is approaching)

3. It is perfectly legal to ride two or three abreast in a bike lane that is wide enough.
4. **Don't yell "clear" for other riders at stop signs** and intersections. This only encourages the running of that stop sign. Let the other riders determine if it is safe.
5. **Be vocal.** Besides "car back", be sure to call out: "Slowing" "Stopping", are especially important when riding in a group. The rider behind you may not be paying attention. "On your left", or "passing" "Car up" (on narrow roads) or any other warning that will add to safety.
6. When pulling back into a single file line, be sure the rider behind you knows your intentions by pointing to the spot you intend to occupy.
7. **Ride predictably.** Don't weave in and out, maintain an even pace. This helps both riders and drivers.
8. If you are in the middle of the group, don't spend much time looking at your bike computer/GPS. Keep your eyes on the road and the other riders.
9. In the event of a **flat tire or other mechanical problem**, at least one other rider should stay behind. If necessary/possible, a third rider should ride ahead to inform the ride leader of the situation. Move to a safe place to change a tire. There is little need for 10 riders to stand and watch another change a tire. The bulk of the group should ride ahead to a safe place to wait. Think "scene safety".
10. If riding in a pace line, or very closely in single file, remember there is a rider right behind you. Do not apply your brakes. If you need to slow down, stop pedaling, sit upright to catch the wind or pull out of line. Call out "slowing".
11. Every member of the group should be sure to **know the route** and the location (coffee shops, etc) of the food/drink break.
12. It is a good idea to carry a cue sheet, if one has been made available. It is not hard to fall off the back of the pack unnoticed, especially if one has a flat or is making a wardrobe adjustment. It may also help you explain to 911 where you are in case of an emergency. Most smart phones have a compass on them that will give you coordinates that emergency responders can use. Most smart phone map apps will "drop a blue pin" on your location.

LHC ride leaders may, at any time, request a member or guest not participate in a ride if it has been determined that there is a safety issue associated with that rider.

1. While groups of 25 - 50 may not be unusual for some other club weekend rides, LHC has found that groups over 10 can cause some frustration to drivers on narrow roads and feel less safe to some riders.
2. When a group exceeds 10 riders, consider splitting the group on narrow roads with no rideable shoulder, such as McCourtney, parts of Wise, Gold Hill, etc.
3. If the ride leader does not designate anyone, one rider should take it upon himself to slow part of the group down until there is at least 200-300 yards of separation to make it clear to drivers there are two distinct groups, not one long, spread out line. Then, the "chase group" can continue at the same speed as the lead group.
4. Look for other "natural" ways to keep larger groups smaller, such as some riders going ahead to restrooms, designated re-grouping spots, etc.
5. Ride leaders (including those leading sub-groups) should communicate their intentions to the rest of the group during rides, i.e. ;
 - A. "We'll regroup at _____."
 - B. "Four of us will continue on to the restrooms."
 - C. "Will you five fall back until we get to _____"

For groups over 18, split into three groups.

If a group is routinely over 10 riders:

Have part of the group leave a few minutes later or start a new, formal group.

OBEYING LAWS

Know and obey all vehicle laws, including stopping at stop signs, right of way, etc. The two things that annoy drivers the most are cyclists who run stop signs and

cyclists who block the roadway (even though, at times, the latter is both legal and safer).

1. If a large group is at a stop sign and vehicles are present, it may be appropriate for 4-6 riders to cross the intersection, the rest waiting for cars to take their turns. A group of 10 riders is not one vehicle.
2. Stop behind any limit line. A bike that is several feet into the intersection confuses drivers.
3. When cars are present, come to a full stop. "Track Stands" and rolling at 2 mph seem to confuse drivers about the cyclists' intentions.
4. Attempt to make eye contact with drivers at stop signs.
5. Be extra careful when a driver waves you through a stop sign or left turn. Other cars in the area may not realize you have "been given permission".
6. Don't assume the driver will yield, even if you have the right-of-way. When in doubt, yield to the car.

MISCELLANEOUS

1. All riders **should carry ID** (Road ID, e.g.), preferable on one's person (wrist, ankle, around the neck), including emergency phone numbers and insurance information. EMTs are trained to look for it.
2. **Never let a rider who is having health or mechanical problems ride alone.** If you see a rider fall back, fall back with him and, if possible, let another rider know you are doing so. If that rider chooses to leave the ride, another rider should accompany him home. If that rider has called someone to pick him up, be sure he is in a safe, public place that is easy to find.
3. **Be courteous at all times.** A "Thank you" to the driver who waves you through or a wave to the driver who waited behind a line of riders before passing safely, can go a long way to improve our image with the public. Say, "Good Morning" to pedestrians. Never antagonize drivers, even if they act aggressively.

Bicycle Law in California

Laws concerning bicycles in California are found in Sections 21200 to 23109 CVC (and other places) and are too extensive to copy here. It is recommended all

cyclists read these sections. Search "Bicycle Law in California" for a good review on Wikipedia. Few drivers and cyclists are aware of many of these laws. Here are a few important ones.

CVC 21200 - 21212 - Bicyclists must follow rules of the road for drivers of vehicles, but not rules for drivers of *motor* vehicles.

CVC 530 - The definition of "roadway" does not include shoulder, therefore, bicycles (as vehicles) are not required to ride on the shoulder (albeit it is usually recommended).

CVC 21202(A) - Cyclists are required to keep right only when faster same direction traffic is present on long, turn-free sections with wide lanes (14 feet) and no debris or other hazards. While cyclists can "take the lane" as any other vehicle, it is usually recommended one stay as far to the right as safe.

CVC 21202(a)(3) - Lane sharing (a bike and a car) is not required when a lane is less than 14 feet wide. If a car comes upon a bike, the car must wait for a safe opportunity to pass.

CVC 21202 - Riding single file is not required (except in a rare situation). If the situation is such that a solo cyclist would not be required to ride "as far to the right as practicable (safe)", such as a too-narrow lane, then there is no obligation for two cyclists to keep right in single file. It is still recommended in most cases.

CVC 21202 - Bicyclists are never required to ride in "door zones". The accepted distance is 4 feet from parked cars.

CVC 21650.1 - Bicyclists are allowed, but never required to ride in the shoulder. Even a wide shoulder can contain glass, sticks, dead animals, cracks and rocks, making it an unsafe place to ride.