



# UXBRIDGE

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RIDE GUIDELINES

# This is your club, **welcome.**



**WE'RE COMMITTED TO CREATING A SAFE, FUN AND REWARDING EXPERIENCE.**

**THE PRACTICES BELOW ARE DESIGNED TO HELP MAKE THIS HAPPEN. WE'RE COUNTING ON YOU TO READ, UNDERSTAND AND ADHERE TO THIS. IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK.**



Group riding, by definition, is a collective experience requiring a certain degree of harmony and cooperation between the participating cyclists. In many ways it's like a group dance where the better everyone understands the various steps the safer and more fun the whole ride experience is. In this case the steps are not difficult but what's essential is that everyone is doing the same dance at the same time. These guidelines provide our Uxbridge Cycling Club (UCC) riders a common understanding of what to expect so we can ride harmoniously.

This document outlines the latest evolution of our collective experience. The club relies on each of us, new or old, to gently and respectfully remind others when these practices are not being adhered to.



## **PREREQUISITES:**

- a. As per OCA rules all participants **MUST** be a UCC club member or a declared guest of an OCA/UCI affiliated club. In other words, you need to have insurance through the OCA to ride with us.
- b. You need a road bike in good working order.
- c. Be self-sufficient. Bring rear blinking light, a charged cell phone, ID, emergency information and the proper clothing for the day. Do not rely on others for water, food, flat repairs (ask a member to show you how or attend a clinic on roadside maintenance).
- d. You are responsible for knowing and following the route. A route map will be emailed prior to every ride. Download it to your GPS or print it.
- e. You need to have a certain minimal level of fitness. Members should be able to ride for 1.5 hrs at 20+km/hr.
- f. You need to have a basic understanding of group riding skills to ride in the **Yellow**, **Orange** or **Red** groups. If you don't, we suggest you begin with our Learn to Ride/Casual Saturday ride and try riding with the **Green** group.
- g. You need to be familiar with and willing to abide by our ride guidelines, be courteous and respectful of other cyclists and road users.
- h. You need to be 18 years or older to ride with us.



## OUR RIDES AT A GLANCE

The majority of our rides originate in Uxbridge on Saturday and Sunday mornings. We travel in all directions on routes that vary in distance from 20km to 100km. A few times a year we will have a 'close-destination ride' that will begin a 30 minute drive away. This allows us to explore new territory not within normal reach given time and distance constraints.

Departure times are either 8 or 9am (see below).



### Sunday Group Ride

- Riders divide into groups of **Red**, **Orange**, **Yellow** and **Green** depending on goals and capability
- **Red** + **Orange** Groups are provided the same route. Distances begin at 60km and increase to 100km.
- The **Yellow** Group is a no-drop ride and a designated ride captain will ride the whole route. The **Green** group rides are shorter and close to town, no sweeper is provided for that route.
- **Green** Group distances begin at 20km and increase to 40km but riders can choose to ride shorter or longer as desired
- Multiple turn-back points are available on all routes

### Saturday Furious UCC Interval Training Ride (FUCCIT)

- No-drop, distance @50km
- Interval training option to compliment Sunday ride
- Riders of all abilities welcome
- Riders collect after each interval and ride slowly to the next hot-spot/interval
- Monthly time-trial option

### Saturday Learn-to-Ride/Casual Ride

- No-drop, casual group riding (20-50km)
- Learn to ride/recovery ride/social hang-out ride - you choose
- For those interested, group riding skills will be taught during the ride
- Additional clinics on maintenance, flat repair etc. may be organized depending on interest



For all club rides, the routes will be sent via email weekly. Please ensure you have subscribed to the 'Newsletter' at the bottom of our home page at [uxbridgecycling.com](http://uxbridgecycling.com).

Groups are to stick to the designated route map (no modifying the route unless for a good reason).

## NEWSLETTER



## HOW WE RIDE

**1. MEETING PLACE:** Our groups meet at the Uxbridge arena (291 Brock St., West) public parking lot.

**2. DEPARTURE TIME:** This depends on the season. To accommodate changes in light and temperature, our weekend rides depart at 9am in the spring and fall. The weeks between June 1st and August 31st, we depart at 8am. **We will depart promptly at the posted time.**

Allow yourself time to get to the start and do what you need to do to be rolling on time. Don't be 'that guy' who shows up at the departing time expecting everyone to wait while we pretend not to curse under our breath as you pump up your tires and get your bottles ready. That's bad karma and will cost you beer.



**3. STARTING THE RIDE:** Saturday Learn to Ride/Casual Ride - as the name suggests, this is a casual no-drop ride. The practices below pertain mainly to the Sunday Group Ride.

For added safety in town, **each of the groups will leave separately with a 2 minute gap between groups.**

Ride leader leads the way out of town and sets a manageable pace. The first 3-5km of each ride will be a warm-up. This includes the hills on the routes departing southbound on 7th Concession and eastbound on Brookdale Rd. No early heroes please.

Single file riding out of town and into town. Heading out of town we will ride single file until we make the turn at Brookdale (heading southeast), at Wagg Rd. (heading south), Oakside Drive (heading north). Once outside of these areas riding two abreast is permissible. If we experience denser traffic, or other conditions that deem it necessary, return to single file formation.

On those routes, we will recollect at the locations described here to give riders in their respective groups a chance to collect:

- Ride to the South or West: S/W corner of 7th Conc/Wagg
- Ride to the East: N/W corner of Foxfire Chase/Lake Ridge Rd
- Ride to the North: NE corner of 6th Conc/Sandford

Please, no Strava segment hunting on Sunday group rides.

**When regrouping, it is critical all riders move to the shoulder and not block traffic.**



**4. PICKING YOUR GROUP:** Our experience has shown that to have a group of cyclists who have similar fitness, and goals in mind for that days' ride, results in a more enjoyable, safer and harmonious ride. As such, we'll divide into groups **Green**, **Yellow**, **Orange** or, **Red**.

Picking your group and being realistic about your capabilities and goals makes the ride smoother for everyone. It's better to be comfortable in your group than maxed-out all the time.

We encourage you to consider the following criteria when selecting a group to ride with:

<b>Red Group</b>	<b>Orange Group</b>	<b>Yellow Group</b>	<b>Green Group</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Av speed 30+km/hr</li> <li>• At season start: comfortable riding 80+km distance</li> <li>• In season: ~200+ km/week</li> <li>• Riding 3+ days/week</li> <li>• 3,000+km/year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Av speed 28-30 km/hr</li> <li>• At season start: comfortable riding 50+km distance</li> <li>• In season: ~150+ km/week</li> <li>• Riding 2-3x/week</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Av speed 26-28 km/hr</li> <li>• At season start: comfortable riding 50+km distance</li> <li>• In season: ~120+ km/week</li> <li>• Riding 2-3x/week</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 22-26 km/hour</li> <li>• At season start: comfortable riding 20+km distance</li> <li>• In season: ~40+ km/week</li> <li>• Riding 1-3x/week</li> </ul>



#### 5. GROUP PACING, DROPPING BACK AND STEPPING UP

This is a group ride\*, not a race.

That said, there are likely as many preferred paces as there are riders. The reality is, we're all managing the tension between getting a workout and rolling together in groups. If you want to drop everyone, this isn't the ride for you.

What happens if you can't keep up with the group you're in? No worries. Either we're having a bad day or we've just misjudged our capabilities, it happens. We usually have all the groups ride predominantly the same route. The **Red** and **Orange** are given the same longer route and travel at different paces while the **Yellow** and **Green** have shorter routes that shares the beginning section of the **Red** and **Orange** ride.

In essence, because **Red** and **Orange** group riders follow the same route, **Red**'s can easily drop back to the **Orange**'s. The **Yellow** route will be a no-drop ride led by a designated ride captain. The ride captain will ride the FULL **Yellow** route (no short-cuts) so no one is dropped.

Stepping up from **Green** to **Yellow** to **Orange** to **Red**. We encourage this - hurrah!

If you're considering the longer **Red** and **Orange** route keep in mind:

1. You'll need to maintain a faster pace - 28-30 km/hr average (**Orange**) or 30+ km/hr average (**Red**).
2. You have the **Orange** sweep behind you.
3. You have the option to take a shorter route back.

If you are planning to drop back or are struggling with the pace, communicate your situation to your group. This is a JOINT responsibility between the riders at the back watching for others AND the rider falling off to communicate their situation. The spirit of this is to have us all looking out for each other, ensure everyone stays safe, has the capacity and a plan to make it back safely.

\***Green** Group riders are often newer to riding, have a very diverse skill level and are less comfortable riding in larger groups. They will often ride side-by-side in pairs or smaller groups with ample space between riders. They are encouraged to ride with at least one other. Because the distances are shorter and much closer to home, there will be no sweep for this group.



## 6. HOT SPOTS

Every group ride has to have a degree of compromise. One person's hammer-fest is another person's recovery ride. We try to accommodate everyone's wishes by offering different opportunities along the route for some hard efforts. Almost all our routes involve sections where the option exists for the riders to break from the group and go as fast as they wish. We call these the Hot Spots.

**At a Hot Spot, groups are permitted to break formation and regroup at the pre-designated locations.** Many of these Hot Spots involve hills. We do ask you to stay to the right and not scatter across the hill when the group breaks apart. Slower riders stay right and make room for the faster riders to get by without forcing them too far out. We want to stay 'Tight and to the Right'.

### Four common denominators to a Hot Spot:

1. It is pre-designated\*, not impromptu.
2. A quiet section of road
3. No traffic lights or stop signs
4. A safe regrouping location at the end of the section

\*Ask a senior member if you're unsure of the Hot Spot locations before and during each ride.

### Some rules about Hot Spots:

- a. Going hard is optional, not compulsory. Those that choose to cruise at the regular group pace can rest assured that the group will wait for them at the regrouping point.
- b. All riders must wait at the regrouping spot. Under no circumstances can anybody soft pedal down the road. This causes confusion for the late arrivers. They think the group is leaving them behind. If you feel the need to keep moving come back toward the late arrivers and then ride back with them.
- c. Never regroup in a manner that would obstruct traffic in any way. All of our regrouping spots offer plenty of space to pull over safely. No excuses for blocking traffic.



## 7. ROLLING HILLS

These are less challenging than most Hot Spots but are everywhere in the Uxbridge area. People's tendency is to ramp up the effort up the hills and coast on the downhills. This drives fellow riders crazy and breaks up or bunches up the groups.

Instead, to keep a group together on rolling terrain use a 'Social Paceline' (below) and then as a group, **climb slightly easier but descend harder**. The group speed will be more consistent and the group will more likely remain intact.

When you are at the front of the group on short descents pedal to keep the pace up. Remember there are riders drafting behind you who will have to brake if you don't do this.

We maintain full stops at ALL stop signs.



## 8. STEEP ASSENTS AND DESCENTS (HOT SPOT, OR NOT)

There are occasional sections of road where there are steep (but short) grades. In particular:

- 7th Concession, 1 Km South of Elgin Drive.
- Zephyr Road from 6th concession Zephyr
- 6th concession just south of Zephyr Road

On these and similar roads, we recommend the group take the following actions.

### Ascending:

- a. **Ride single file and as far to the right as possible.** This will allow faster riders to pass and at most be two abreast.
- b. If you have become the lead rider, move to the right so others may pass
- c. Never ride more than two abreast
- d. If it's not a hot spot, consider riding easier to help the group stay together

### Descending:

- a. Due to high speeds, sometimes unpredictable road conditions and lack of time and ability to communicate, riders should open up gaps of at least 2 m between each rider front to back and side to side.
- b. Riders should move 1-2 m from the right edge of the road. It is not safe to ride close to the edge of the road at high speeds due to wind gusts.
- c. Send the heaviest and presumably the fastest riders down first to avoid bottlenecks. The goal is to reduce the amount of passing on the descent.
- d. If you've become the lead rider, move to the right so others can pass.
- e. All passing must happen on the left and be accompanied with a clear "PASSING ON YOUR LEFT" warning. **Never pass on the right.**
- f. **Do NOT cross the yellow dividing line** in the center of the road.



## 9. THE FINAL 20% (OF THE RIDE)

The final 20% of the ride is up for grabs. Some riders are beat, some still have gas in the tank. It's time for you to sharpen your strategy skills and show us what you've got. Can you break away? How long can you hang in for? Can you bridge back up? Let's find out. There will be communication with the group when the pace is going to pick up.

**Primary designated Final 20% effort sections:**

- **From the north** (southbound): 6th Con/Zephyr Rd → 6th Con/Davis Dr
- **From the south** (northbound): Townline Rd/Ashburn Rd → Brookdale Rd/7th Con
- **From the west** (eastbound): Wagg/Durham 30 → Wagg/7th Con

Like Hot Spots, the Final 20% is entirely optional.

As a courtesy, loop back and collect your group before the final warm-down kms. For those that can stay, we invite you to hang out for a cuppa at The Bridge Social Inc.



## COMMUNICATIONS

Communication is absolutely critical to the success of all group rides. It starts right from the beginning even before the group leaves: The rider needs to communicate which group and pace of ride they want. On the road riders need to communicate the ride formation, rotation and pace. Riders at the front need to call out road hazards and traffic situations.

The bottom line is that the quality and safety of the ride is dependent on frequent and clear communications between all the riders (not just from the experienced ones). Never assume everyone in the group knows a car is approaching or that the group is turning. Everything that can affect the group needs to be called out. If you see someone riding inappropriately such as overlapping wheels or surging off the front we all should say something. Be polite but make it known that that it doesn't fit with our group ride practices. We all own these rides and if someone does something dangerous it's in everyone's best interest to correct it. Say something before it's too late.

We all have a responsibility to the riders around us. When we are at the front we are responsible to the riders behind to provide a smooth and steady pull and to point out hazards. When we are at the back we are responsible to call out cars coming from the back and to maintain the integrity of the group by not allowing gaps.

**Bottom line: It's your club. We all own the ride equally. Communicate please.**





## RIDE FORMATION

### THE BASIC RIDE FORMATION: “TIGHT AND TO THE RIGHT”

Our goal as a disciplined and well organized club is to share the enjoyment of the road with our club members as well as the general public. We are well aware that we have to share the road with motorized vehicles. To reduce the potential conflict between these two groups we travel at off peak hours; Saturday and Sunday mornings and we frequent only the least travelled roads.

In order to further protect ourselves we travel two abreast or in a double paceline. This is an internationally recognized cycling formation used by professionals and amateurs around the world. The main objective of the double paceline is to reduce the length of the line of cyclists in order to allow vehicles to pass with greater ease and increased safety. It encourages drivers to make full lane changes when passing which provides a safer gap between the passing vehicle and the cyclists.

Aggressive drivers may attempt the dangerous pass between the center line and the group, known as “threading the needle”. At the Uxbridge Cycling Club we have implemented a compromised position we call “Tight and to the Right”. The idea is to take a traditional two abreast formation and position it as far right as is safely possible. **Our goal is to accommodate the approaching driver with a clear view forward so that they make a clean and safe pass as soon as possible.**

In order for us to accomplish this, we as a club, are required to ride in a formation that is ‘tight’ and well disciplined.

By ‘tight’ we mean:

- Cyclists are to be 2-3ft apart laterally at the shoulders and,
- 2-3ft apart front to back (wheel to wheel).

The group’s primary goal is to maintain the cohesion of this formation. Each rider must be disciplined about holding their position in a smooth predictable manner and not creating gaps or overlaps which jeopardize the ride quality and safety.



## HOW WE ROTATE

We use two methods to rotate cyclists within a basic “tight and to the right” formation. One we refer to as a Social Paceline and the other as a Rotating Paceline. If your group has a Ride Leader, they will call out the appropriate formation for the needs of the group but any cyclists within the group can call out a suggestion.

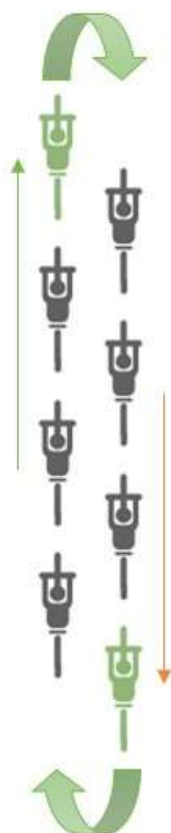
### SOCIAL PACELINE

This is our standard rotation used while warming up or just cruising along. In the Social Paceline we start from the premise of the two abreast formation where everybody is 2-3 ft apart laterally and fore/aft. The two leading cyclists are breaking the wind and setting the pace.

The lead cyclist on the right, after a reasonable period of time (ie 1- 2 minutes, its flexible) asks the cyclist on their left to “Cover Me”. That means the leading left cyclist will gently ride forward and fade right to shelter the right side of the group. In turn the left side of the group will gently advance forward to the front of the group beside the right line. Those two riders will now lead the group for whatever time they feel comfortable with, again it’s negotiable. All passes are to be done smoothly and gently and make sure that your rear wheel is clear before you fade right.



Riders cycle in two parallel lines  
1-3 feet apart  
fore/aft and 2-3 feet apart laterally



The lead rider on the right fades back while the leading left rider advances forward and to the right

**A very important point to rotating a group:** While you are in front of the group, the group is at your mercy. Anything you do, good or bad, will affect the entire group. If your pass is smooth and steady, then the group will remain smooth and steady. If you accelerate aggressively it will start to shatter the group and create gaps and confusion. If you half wheel the lead rider beside you it will offset the whole group or create gaps. We all have a responsibility to the riders behind us to move in a smooth and predictable way and watch the road surface ahead.

There is no obligation to go to the front or stay at the front for long. If you are not able to keep the pace of the group or are uncomfortable at the front there are two main options:

- i) Simply continue to rotate instead of holding your spot at the front and indicating to the person behind you to rotate in front of you.
- ii) Remain at the rear of the group itself while the group rotates in front of you.

Either way, your ride captain will be there to help you choose what might be best.



## ROTATING PACELINE

This rotation is different from the Social Paceline in one fundamental way: **The act of rotating is constant.** There are no static moments. When the left lead rider moves smoothly and gradually forward and clears the right line of riders, he/she then gently fades to the right. The transitioning lead rider must be careful not to touch wheels with the passed rider by checking under their arm for the rider's wheel. The right rider can assist by calling out 'clear' when the passing cyclist is safely ahead. As soon as that first rotation is complete the next one begins as if all the cyclists in the group are part of the same chain. In the Rotating Paceline all the cyclists should be moving through the rotation at the same speed.

### Important points to execute the Rotating Paceline:

- a. Do not attack or surge off the front when it is your turn to pull. You are supposed to go slightly faster than the receding line. Surging or attacking will cause gaps and jerk the speed of the line around. Pull smoothly and gently to the front and be there to shelter the riders behind you, not gap them.
- b. When you've just moved over to the head of the slower lane, it's useful to shift a single gear easier. This will naturally slow you and create the space for the next rider to slide ahead of you. Conversely, when at the back of the slow lane and moving over to the faster lane, shift up to a harder gear and increase your effort slightly.
- c. Do not leave gaps within the line when you are in the back of the rotation. All riders need to focus on maintaining the same gaps all the way around the rotation.
- d. Riders wishing to miss a rotation can do so by sitting a bike's length back of the group and allowing the group to rotate through. It's best to call out to the rider ahead that you are not pulling through to avoid their hesitation.
- e. It's also helpful for the last rider on the advancing side to call out to the last rider to remind the last receding rider that they need to transition next. Gaps often happen when the last rider misses the transition.
- f. The rotation can go from left to right or vice versa. Experienced cyclists will tailor the rotation so that the advancing line is sheltered from a crosswind. We generally opt for the left to the right rotation because the HTA specifies passing on the left.



## SINGLE FILE PACELINE

We make every effort to ride on the quietest roads at the quietest times. Occasionally busy roads are required for short distances to bridge us to the next quiet section. At these times, we will ride single file. **This includes Toronto St. in Uxbridge.** Otherwise all our group rides are typically two-abreast and tight-to-the-right.

## ECHELONS

This is a formation where the cyclists are spread diagonally across the road to gain shelter from a crosswind. This formation is unacceptable for group riding in our community. It completely blocks the lane and is counter to our “Tight and to the Right” strategy where the driver is to be given a view up the left side of the lane.



### PAST ROTATING APPROACH

#### “DOUBLE-PEEL”

In the past on very quiet sections of road the “double-peel” approach has been used. For greater consistency and to eliminate periods where we might be four-abreast, we will **NO LONGER** be using the ‘double-peel’ rotation method.



## EMERGENCY STOPS

**Pull over for emergency vehicles.** When being approached by an emergency vehicle (fire truck, ambulance, or police) with its lights and siren activated, we are required under the HTA to pull over our group and stop. It doesn’t matter if the emergency vehicle is approaching from the front or behind.

Act fast, but act safely and in control: when a siren is heard or lights are seen, immediately shout out to your group to pull over and stop. A siren or lights means stop now but not a panic stop, a controlled and safe stop.

**How to stop a group: let’s presume your group is riding 2 abreast.**

- a. The Ride Leader calls out to the group
  - “EMERGENCY STOP, GROUP STOPPING NOW”
  - “RIGHT LINE STOP FIRST
  - “LEFT LINE PASS AND STOP”
- b. The right line applies their brakes to reduce the speed in a controlled manner, eventually pulling over to a complete stop. Once stopped, cyclists must keep as close as possible to the right edge of the road, clear of any intersections.
- c. The left line completely passes the right line and once safely clear, slows in a controlled manner. Once stopped, cyclists must keep as close as possible to the right edge of the road, clear of any intersections.
- d. This can all happen within seconds. There is no need for panic. What is essential is that the decision to perform an “emergency stop” be made quickly, loudly and clearly so that the group has time to perform the stop safely.

## OTHER IMPORTANT TIPS

- a. Never ever overlap your wheel with another.
- b. Ride smooth and steady all the time. No sudden or abrupt movements or over reactions to potholes etc.
- c. Don't be that person who surges when it's their turn to pull or leaves gaps in the rotation.
- d. When following a wheel be just slightly offset ie 3-4" so that if there is a sudden stop you don't immediately slam into the wheel ahead. The offset gives you an additional few feet to recover.
- e. Group rides are not races. We are there to support each other by taking turns in the wind. Only in Hot Spots and during the 'Final 20%' is it ok to try to drop your friends.
- f. When you see someone committing a ride foul politely say something. We are all responsible for the quality of our rides.
- g. If you get a flat, give a loud shout out right away or there is a good chance the pack will ride away without even noticing you. If the group knows they will stop and help you fix it quickly.
- h. Do not yell obscenities to motorists or get into arguments with the police. It's never productive and will lead to more bad blood and possible retribution. We ask that cyclists not engage in any kind of confrontation with drivers or police officers. This includes hand gestures involving the center digit. We are working hard to improve the reputation of the UCC and all cyclists in general. If words have to be exchanged let the Group Ride Leader do the talking. (Feel free to video the exchange if you feel the individual is dangerous.) It's important to understand that when you ride with the club and when you wear our club jersey you become an Ambassador for both the club and all cyclists in general. Let's not do anything to fuel the flames of discontent. Nothing meaningful gets resolved on the road.
- i. We maintain full stops at ALL stop signs.

**KEEP SAFE, HAVE FUN AND THANKS FOR RIDING WITH THE UXBRIDGE CYCLING CLUB.**