



The Road Rules: Cycling Etiquette

1. Road Rules for cyclists

As a member of Redline Triathlon Club you should be fully aware of the laws that are applicable whilst riding on the road.

Please see the following link for road rules applying to cyclists in Qld -

http://www.tmr.qld.gov.au/~-/media/Travelandtransport/Cycling/Bike%20user%20guide/Road%20rules%20for%20cyclists/Queensland_road_rules_cyclists_brochure.pdf

2. Equipment

Before you even begin to ride it is critical that your bike is both roadworthy and well maintained. This is to ensure your safety and those who you are riding with. Also a bike that is not maintained is more likely to have mechanicals that will delay the ride. But more importantly, it is the law to have a roadworthy bike.

Before taking part in any training ride or event please make sure that your bike is roadworthy and maintained. It is your responsibility to ensure this, the Coaches will not conduct pre-ride checks, so please make sure your bike is fit to ride.

2.1. Tyres

Before your event and participating with our Club training rides it is asked that you have new tyres fitted on your bike.

Racing slicks or similar light tyres are not suitable for the tough roads that many of our events are held on, as are tubular tyres (or singles) as spares are not available.

Before your event and/or training rides you should -

- Look at the condition of your tyres making sure there is sufficient grip and the rubber hasn't worn down. Also check over the entire tyre for cuts and pieces of glass and other materials lodged in the tyre. You should also routinely check inside the tyre for any cuts that have gone through and repair or replace as this will cause flats. Also check the condition of the rim tap to ensure it is not wearing. If you start getting flats regularly, it is probably time to replace your tyres.
- Check the air pressure in your tyres to ensure it is sufficient for the riding conditions. If unsure of correct pressures check with your local bike mechanic for guidance as every tyre and wheel combo has its own ideal pressure. It will also depend on the terrain and road conditions as to the correct pressure.
- Ensure you have sufficient spare tubes and an air supply (pump or CO2 canisters). We recommend taking 2 or more tubes & CO2 canisters along with levers. You need to be self-sufficient, while we normally ride in a group, there may be times when you are riding alone and you will need to know what to do.

2.2 Brakes

Make sure brakes are operating well and that the pads are not worn. If the brakes are making noises then get them checked as it indicates issues. Brake levers should only require minimal pressure to be effective.

2.3 Gears and Drivetrain

Ensure that your gears are functioning well and are not jumping and chains are not overly worn. If you experience regular chain drops then there is an issue, possibly a worn chain or alignment problem that needs to be fixed. Also chains should be cleaned and re-greased regularly to ensure they function well and prevent additional and unnecessary wearing to your componentry. If you have Di2s then consider bringing a spare battery with you and do not forget your charger!

2.4 Bike maintenance

Ensure your bike is clean as a clean bike is less likely to have mechanical issues. Cleaning your bike can be easily done without the need to take it to a mechanic. A clean chain, cluster and chain rings will generally ensure your gears operate well and reduce wearing. If ever in doubt about the state of repair of your bike you should consult a qualified bike mechanic to check and service as required. A regular maintenance program is recommended for your own safety and enjoyment.

3. Nutrition/Hydration:

For all rides you must come prepared with at least two water bottles, one with an electrolyte/food drink, and carbohydrates by way of food bar/s, gels,

banana/s and other. You should also ensure you consume a low GI breakfast/snack prior to riding. As a general rule, you should drink at least one 500-750ml of fluid per hour, and consume 1 carbohydrate per 1kg of body weight (information can be found on food labels). It is every rider's responsibility to ensure adequate cycling nutrition/hydration for their personal performance and safety, and for the safety of the group. For rides longer than two hours ride leaders will make necessary water stops for the ride group for refills.

4. Traffic lights/Stop signs/Give way signs

- We must always obey red lights, stop and give way signs.
- If lights change while the peloton is part way through, the riders not in the intersection must stop. It is illegal to ride through an orange light; however you may complete your crossing should it change after you enter the intersection.
- If lights change the riders must call "stopping" to warn those behind of their intentions. The riders that make it through need to call a split and have the peloton slow. The key is to not panic or try to stay on by running the lights.

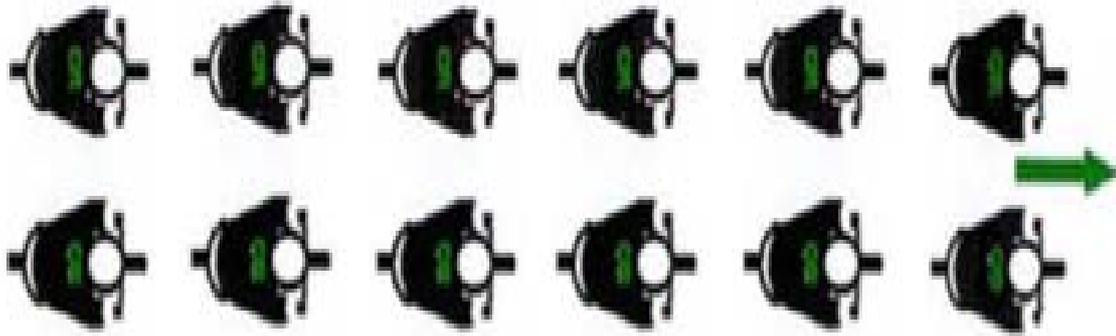
5. Basic Peloton Riding Formation

Group formation is an essential of peloton riding. A well-formed group is safer, more efficient and more predictable to other road users. Generally on Redline Triathlon Club rides the peloton should always -

- Ride in 2 x 2 formation where safe and appropriate to do so,
- Keep a distance of approximately 0.5-1m off the rear wheel of rider in front,
- Maintain a distance of no more than 1 metre between yourself and the rider beside you.

5.1 Sitting on the Wheel

- Avoid focusing directly on the wheel in front as this does not give you the full picture of what is occurring ahead of you. Focus further up the group at the riders 2 or 3 in front. By focusing on the rider you will have a greater awareness of what is happening in the group. Look and listen for gear changes, whether riders further up are pedalling or not, if riders further up are slowing, signalling or moving outwards. This will allow you to better anticipate, read and react to what is happening ahead.

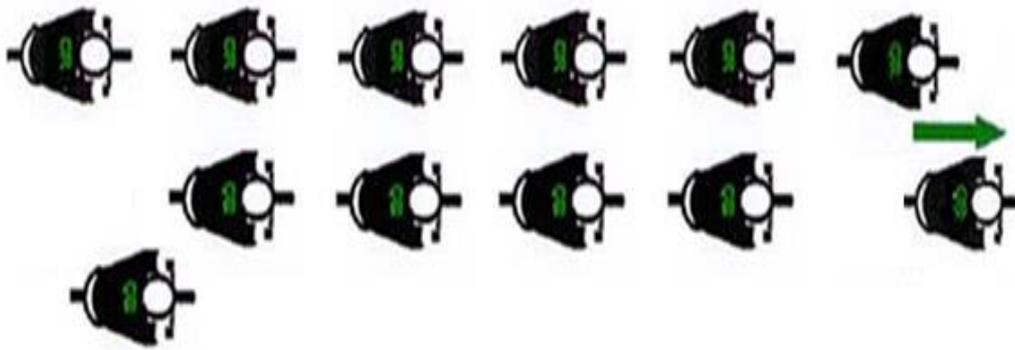


ABOVE: Basic Pack Formation: riders maintaining two straight lines with each rider sitting level to the rider next to them.

- When riding 2 x 2 formations the goal is to ride evenly with your partner. You should never ride with your front wheel slightly in front, ESPECIALLY when you are the pair on the front. This is called half wheeling and will affect the whole peloton (see next section).
- Do not stop pedalling as you drink/eat, as this causes a ripple effect through the group. Try to remain smooth and consistent with your pedal stroke and speed as you reach for food or drink. Practise makes perfect with these movements!
- Never free wheel if you are on the front of the pack. Maintain an even pace, if you stop pedalling at the front it will ripple down to the back and cause unnecessary slowing and surging. This is particularly important when going downhill. If you hear the command behind you “Pedal Pedal Pedal” that means start pedalling and do not stop.
- When standing make sure you are at the top of your pedal stroke. This will ensure you maintain pressure on your pedals and minimise the risk of 'roll back'. When standing you can sometimes force the bike back towards the rider behind causing a reaction behind. You can call 'standing' or 'sitting' to warn the rider behind. Always be aware of this possibility when you are behind another rider

5.2 Half wheeling

Do not half wheel or overlap wheels. This is when the rider behind has their wheel level or in front of the rider in front's rear wheel. The other rider is not expecting you there and that area should be left to allow for the front rider to move to avoid obstacles or allow an 'exit point' in case of emergency. If you take that space you may find your wheel being unexpectedly taken out.



*** Two examples of half-wheeling positions – rider at the front constantly pulling ahead of their partner, while rider at rear overlapping wheels.**

5.3 Position on the Road

5.3.1 Traffic

- Although cyclists have rights on the road, be aware that some motorists have no regard for this. Erratic or inconsistent cycling puts pressure on drivers of vehicles. Ensure that all your movements are clear, noticeable and predictable to everyone around you.
- When riding in slow traffic do not ride through the traffic to move past vehicles. The group should always 'stay in the traffic' occupying the lane. You should move as if every rider is connected so any movements in and around the traffic can be followed safely without disrupting other traffic.
- When traffic is stopped, stop behind the last stationary vehicle as you would if you were in a car. A large bunch is as big as a vehicle on the road and needs to behave like one.
- You should never overtake a car on the left that is indicating to turn left.
- Where safe you should always ride on the shoulder of the road or bike lane and as far to the left that is practical.

5.3.2 Interactions with other Road Users

As cyclists we know that not all road users tolerate our presence on the road. We must remember that we are ambassadors not only for Redline Triathlon Club but the cycling community as a whole. If another road user does sound their horn or abuse us we ask that you refrain from retaliatory actions at all times. While the behaviour is unacceptable we do not want to inflame the

situation, irate drivers are irrational and any reaction can cause an irrational response.

Our preference would be to get the vehicle past and away from us as quickly and safely as possible without further escalation.

If the incident requires reporting to police then the Coaches will do so on our behalf. We ask that you don't take matters in to your own hands and act out against other road users.

5.3.3 Overtaking another Rider/Group

- Always overtake on the right.
- Ensure there is sufficient room in front of the rider you are overtaking for you to re-enter the group without causing sudden braking.
- In Queensland, you can only cycle 3 abreast where the 3rd rider is overtaking. If the group is over taking another peloton riding 2 x 2, you should first reduce to single file to ensure we are only 3 wide, then reform to 2 x 2 formation once safely past.
- Always time passing to allow the entire group to pass safely, be aware of on-coming traffic or changing road conditions so that the group does not become split or tangled into the peloton that is being overtaken.
- The front riders are to ensure they indicate they are moving around other riders and use a bell or warn the riders they are being overtaken to avoid sudden movements into our groups path. The front riders must also maintain a speed that will let the whole group pass the other peloton. Do not reduce speed until the group is back in formation.

5.4 Changing Lanes

When the bunch has to change lanes, the front riders must hand signal. The rear rider must scan behind to ensure the road is safe and then make the call 'wait' or 'take the lane' to indicate it is safe to move across. Remember every rider in the peloton has a responsibility to pass the call to the front riders.

- Riding two abreast / Single file Riding two (2) abreast is the basic riding formation that will be maintained when safe and practical to do so. However, if the road becomes too narrow, dangerous or traffic volumes too high we may need to drop to single file. Moving to single file can be dangerous if everyone is not well versed in the procedures. Calls to change to and from double to single files and vice versa should come from either the Ride Leaders or front pair only.
- Lead riders must clearly call "Single" for single file and "Double" to return to two abreast. The call should be passed down the bunch to

ensure everyone is aware. They may also indicate by raising hands above their heads showing one or two fingers.

- To move to single the riders on the left will have 'right of way' and riders on the right should move in behind them. Riders in both lanes will need to adjust their speeds slightly to leave sufficient gap for the rider on the right to move left. It is important that the lead rider does not slow down and maintains their speed so the riders behind do not bunch up.
- The group should remain in single until a ride leader signals to return to double. Riders should never assume they can return to double without a call from a ride leader, the danger may not be immediately apparent to riders, especially if we have gone to single to allow other traffic past from behind. During events we often encounter wide loads that move slowly past the group and request we go single well before they are upon us.
- When call is made to return to double, riders should return to their prior position – that is rider in positions 2, 4 6, etc. will return to the right and 1, 3 5 etc. will stay on the left. Moving out of this sequence will just cause gaps and splits down the peloton where riders behind will have to scramble and surge to catch up. You must return to the position you were initially in.

5.5 Lead Riders

The riders at the front of the peloton are called the 'lead riders' and are very important for the smooth riding of the peloton. They set the pace, make the calls for road obstacles and warn the peloton of any traffic changes. The front pairing must always be alert and on the lookout.

- Lead riders should avoid extended turns keeping them to two (2) minutes then smoothly rolling through. If you do not wish to lead due to fatigue or not feeling strong enough, then you should attempt to move across prior to making the lead, but close to the front (2nd or 3rd wheel). Before any change please communicate clearly with the riders around you what your intentions are.
- When going up hills lead riders must ride at a pace that is sustainable for all riders in the group. They should not increase or decrease speeds suddenly, if reducing speeds do it gradually to avoid riders behind having to brake hard then start again from a standing start. This will cause gaps and accidents behind as the group compresses. A tip is to gauge the speed the slowest rider in the group can maintain up a hill and adjust to their speed.
- When travelling downhill the lead riders must continue to pedal and must not free wheel, to avoid the group compressing and braking unnecessarily. The key is to maintain consistent pedal pressure when

cresting the hill, do not surge over or stop to rest, and then maintain the same pressure all the way down the hill.

- Lead riders must be aware of the speed being ridden and ensure they are not riding at a speed the group cannot maintain. When the lead riders push the pace the group splits compromising efficiency and the safety of the ride. However if the lead riders are going too slow for the group the riders become compressed and may start riding to the right of the wheel in front also compromising the safety of the ride. Lead riders must take note of the road conditions, traffic and wind etc. to maintain an appropriate pace.

5.6 Hazards and Calling

It is important to properly identify what is hazardous to the group. You do not need to call the hazard if it is too far away to be a problem to the bunch, or if it is too minor. Making too many irrelevant hazard calls may lead the bunch into ignore calls. Calls must be made in clear and calm voice to avoid over - reactions.

Overzealous calls of HOLE!!!! Indicate a large crater has opened up and will swallow the group and can lead to riders being spooked making unnecessary reactions, hard swerving or tightening up. This can lead to accidents. Remember simple clear calm calls at all times.

Lead riders must —

- Constantly scan the road ahead for what lies ahead for the peloton.
- When required, calls must be made by the lead riders and then passed back through the entire peloton with appropriate hand signals if safe.

The official calls are —

- **'hole left'** (hole to the left of the bunch)
- **'hole right'** (hole to the right of the bunch)
- **Also 'rocks', 'glass', 'sticks', 'branches', 'door' (car door), 'gravel', 'pedestrians'...etc**
- **'rider up'** (passing a slower rider on the road)
- **'car up'** (parked car ahead)
- **'lights'** (stopping for traffic lights)
- **'rolling'** (not stopping)
- **'single'** (ride single file)
- **'double'** (returning to double file/2 abreast)
- **'clear'** (traffic free — intersection/roundabout)
- **'stopping'** (traffic present -intersection/roundabout)
- **'split'** (there is a split in the bunch that needs to be repaired)
- **'all on'** (group is back together and can return to normal speed)
- **'wait'** (not safe to move across lanes)
- **'take the lane'** (the next lane is clear and it is safe to move across)

- **'steady'** (reduce speed)
- **'pedal pedal pedal'** (keep pedaling, especially downhill)

5.7 Riding at the rear

The riders on the back of the peloton also have a huge responsibility for the safety of the group. Often a ride leader will be designated to this role and may remain at the back for the entire ride.

This person must -

- Call riders out if lane changing 'take the lane' call,
- Warn of traffic approaching from behind ('car back', 'truck back')
- Warn of another bike/peloton overtaking the peloton ('rider(s) passing').

The tail riders are also there to catch any riders that may be dropping back for mechanicals or who are fatigued or falling behind. They may communicate with others of issues and ensure riders at the front are aware of issues. Riders are responsible to carry their directions down the line to the front riders. They may also order the peloton to stop or slow for any reason.

Every time the rear riders needs to check behind, that requires the rear rider to take their eyes off the rider in front, the rider must -

- Assess the bunch is steady, and not slowing or swerving obstacles.
- Allow extra room to the wheel in front to allow for a longer reaction time.

5.8 Communicating the Message

- All riders have responsibility for the safety of the peloton through by relaying calls or messages through the peloton

The middle peloton riders must relay ALL calls/messages clearly.

This is more important when windy conditions, or there is a lot of other road noise, to ensure the message is being heard by all riders. Never assume the rider behind or in front has heard, if you don't hear a relay call then call it again until it is acknowledged.

All calls for obstacles must be called and signalled all the way to the rear.

5.9 Rotating the Lead

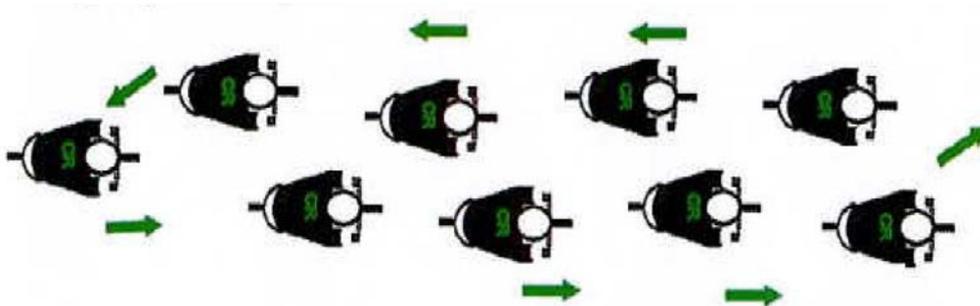
- Lead riders need not stay on the front too long (2 mins)
- If you feel you are not strong enough to take a turn, when it is your turn on the front - take it, tell the rider on the front on your left that you are tired and advise them that you are rolling over to the left.

- Ask the new rider on your right to also roll over so you are no longer on the front. DO NOT suddenly pull off the line when it is your turn, as it only leaves a gap and sudden movements create risks.

5.10 Single Rolling Turns / Pace Lining

There may be times when the peloton revert to pace lining or rolling turns. This is where the riders only remain on the front for a few seconds and another rider takes the lead. In this situation one line will be travelling 1-2kms faster than the other. This type of formation can be tricky and requires constant attention and smooth riding with no surges or sudden movements.

- Riders on the outside of the bunch are travelling faster than those on the left
- Lead rider rolling from right to left keep eyes ahead at all times.
- The time to safely move across is when the front of the front wheel of the rider to the left is just being passed by the rider moving across
- Rider who has just moved to the left must continue to pedal but NOT increase the pace, so the bunch pace remains constant
- All riders are to remain pedalling at all times especially those on the FRONT half of the pack
- The last rider in the bunch on the right hand side must indicate with an 'ok' for the next rider to move across the back of the bunch.



ABOVE: correct formation of single rolling turns

ABOVE: correct formation of single rolling turns

5.11 Wet Weather

Riding in wet and inclement weather is often a necessity, especially during events. Extra pre-cautions need to be taken when riding in inclement weather to avoid accidents and increase stopping distances.

When riding in wet weather -

- Increase the gap between cyclists to allow for extra stopping distance and poor visibility.

Redline Triathlon Club – Safe Bunch Riding Guidelines

- Allow for longer stopping times — your brake pads and rims will be wet.
- Slower acceleration to avoid skidding.
- Slow down — especially when cornering, but avoid braking while cornering, slow before the corner (earlier than normal) then release brakes while cornering.
- Be wary of materials that are slippery — road paint, metal grates, tracks...etc.
- Use lights to increase your visibility on the road.
- Reduce pressure in your tyres — allowing for more of the tyre bag on the road for better grip.

5.12 Mechanicals ^[11]_[SEP]

Should you have a mechanical (flat tyre, chain off, etc.) while riding in the peloton, the key is to not panic, brake suddenly or make sudden movements.

If you have a mechanical follow these guidelines –

- Call out “mechanical”, “flat” or “chain off” to alert others around you of an issue and that you may be slowing. If comfortable to do so you may also raise one arm to identify yourself in the peloton.
- Don’t brake or stop suddenly or swerve across the lane. Maintain your line and slow gently to give those around you a chance to move around to create space for you to move to the left.
- Always move to the left (even if in the right hand line), by letting those on your left know of an issue they will give you space to move across. Riders on the left need to be aware and provide a gap to allow the rider to move over safely. Once to the left slow gently and allow the group to pass you and stop ahead of you, in a safe location, without obstructing oncoming traffic/ bicycles/pedestrians.
- Once repaired, it is the sole discretion of the Coach as to whether you can ride back on to the group. If a mechanical issue cannot be repaired alternative arrangements will be discussed to arrange a pick up.

6. Incidents and Accidents

Riding in a group is enjoyable and efficient when done correctly, however it does also pose risks, especially if everyone does not follow the rules. Accidents can and do happen while riding so it is important to be prepared and alert at all times and ensure you are communicating clearly to others to reduce the potential for incidents.

Your safety is paramount, that is why we have a range of safety procedures in place to ensure we are doing everything within our power to create safe and enjoyable training rides. Safety is not the sole responsibility of the Coaches,

every participant has a responsibility to prevent incidents and raise concerns so the group can put actions in place to maintain safety.

If you see or identify an issue you feel could place the peloton at risk we ask that you advise the Coach or ride leader as soon possible so that we may address it.

In the event of an accident the most important thing you can do is to not panic. The Coach or ride leader does have in place accident procedures to allow us to quickly and effectively deal with these situations. Your role in an accident situation is to simply follow the directions of the Coach and Ride Leaders.

But generally speaking if an accident occurs riders should continue to ride and stop ahead of the incident – DO NOT STOP in the road way. Keep riding and find a safe place for the group to pull over and assess the situation. Stopping in the middle of the road is not safe and can cause a more dangerous situation for us and other road users.

7. Key Reminders

A safe and successful group ride requires everyone to do his or her bit. That is everyone communicating, pointing out obstacles, setting appropriate pace, listening and helping others. At the end of the day it is all about teamwork, being a team of cyclists and not a bunch of individual riders.

- Be consistent & predictable.
- Never use mobile phones or iPods while riding (use of earphones is not allowed).
- Use lights in low light times.
- Hand signals — for all turns.
- Check all attachments to your bike to ensure they are secure.
- Always use a proper cycling water bottle. Others will fall out or your bottle cage and become a hazard.
- Get off the road when stopped.
- If you accidentally bump shoulders/handlebars with another rider don't panic, stay relaxed and lean away from each other.
- Ride within your ability — don't over extend yourself.
- Ride with the club as much as possible to learn how the bunch feels on the road.
- Be aware of the other riders in the group. Wait if some are caught at lights (soft pedal until caught). Let the bunch know if a rider is struggling.
- Dress according to the weather.

There is nothing better than riding in a well-drilled cohesive peloton. It is the safest and most efficient way to ride and makes riding long distances so much more enjoyable and achievable for all.

