



# Cobourg Cycling Club Ride Participant Guide 2025



**Please read and understand all guidelines before you ride**



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## Who Are We

The Cobourg Cycling Club is a recreational and competitive cycling club founded in 1974. We are a locally-based, volunteer-run, non-profit organisation affiliated with Ontario Cycling. The club offers rides several days of the week, covering a wide range of fitness and abilities and offering its members great opportunities for skill enhancement and socializing. From casual-paced to competitive road cycling; mountain bikes to time-trialing, we work to appeal to all interest levels and age groups in Cobourg and the surrounding area.



## Mission Statement

Our mission is to encourage, inspire and grow the sport of cycling through skill development, recreational riding, social engagement and competitive events for all abilities.



## Ride Guidelines Overview

**All Participants must be a CCC Club Member or Guest who belongs to an OC/UCI affiliated club.**

- ❖ All Cyclists must adhere to the **Ontario Highway Traffic Act**
  - Under the HTA, a bicycle is a vehicle, just like a car or truck
  - All cyclists must obey all traffic laws
  - Must stop at all stop signs, traffic light
  - Must pull over to the right and stop for emergency vehicles
  - Lights are required within 30 minutes of dusk or dawn and poor visibility conditions (white light on the front, red solid light on the back)
  - The Highway Traffic Act (HTA) does not state one can or cannot ride two-abreast. It only states one should ride as far to the right as practically possible. The Ministry of Transportation Ontario (MTO) also recommends riding at least 1m away from the white line or the curb, so drivers know you're taking the lane
- ❖ All Riders must be registered **CCC/OC Members** in good standing and be able to provide proof via CCC/OC Membership Card
- ❖ Every Rider must have completed all membership form requirements including the OC/CCC Membership Waiver
- ❖ Helmets are **mandatory** on all Cobourg Cycling Club Rides
- ❖ Bikes must be in safe working order with a properly working brake system

- ❖ Front and rear lights are recommended
- ❖ Time trial bikes are not permitted on group rides
- ❖ Understand the Club's Policies, Risk Management Plan and emergency protocols posted on our website
- ❖ Be self-sufficient bring your own water and food, spare tubes and a means to change and inflate a tire repair
- ❖ Have a (fully charged) cell phone for emergencies—ID and credit card are also beneficial.  
**Pro Tip:** Emergency \$20 bill often comes in handy and can buy energy-packed treats
- ❖ **Riding Etiquette;**
  - You are a club and cycling ambassador while on the roads
  - Be kind and courteous to all other road users
  - Be careful not to startle other road users, call out “On your left” before passing
  - Help motorists to pass when safe to do so
  - Point out safety hazards to fellow riders
  - Voice warnings and hand signals are to be used
  - If you see someone struggling help them out
  - Offer assistance when a bike is in need or repair
  - Our rides are supposed to be fun but most of all they are meant to be safe. Safety is the responsibility of every rider.
- ❖ **Ride Leader(s);**
  - Your Ride Leader(s) are the “Host” of the ride, representing the Club and deserve respect
  - Your Ride Leader(s) have been briefed on the rules of the road
  - There is simply no place for individuals who do not embody our Mission and Who We Are and do not follow the Club's Policies
  - Our Ride Leaders are entitled to enforce Rules of the Road, the Club's Risk Management Policy and the Club's Ride Guidelines
  - Ride Leaders have the right to ask offending riders to leave the ride and will report them to the Board
  - If any member is interested in becoming a Ride Leader training will be provided by the Cobourg Cycling Club. For those interested forward your request by email to [president@cobourgcyclingclub.com](mailto:president@cobourgcyclingclub.com)
  - Do not stay on a ride in which you do not feel comfortable. Before leaving the ride make sure to advise your Ride Leader or Co-Leader
  - If a Ride Leader determines that a ride is not adequately prepared for a ride, the Ride Leader has the authority to refuse participation

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# Before The Ride

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## Cycle Club App - Where to Register for the Ride

1. Download the Cycle Club App - Cycle Club App is available for both iOS and Android. Alternatively, you may use the App in your web browser at [cycleclubapp.com](https://cycleclubapp.com)
2. Sign Up or Sign In - If you're new to Cycle Club App, follow the steps to sign up and create your profile. **\*\*\*\*Remember to use the same email you used to register for the club\*\*\*\***. If you have an existing account, just sign in
3. Join the Club - Click the "+" to find your club and search for Cobourg Cycling Club. If your email is recognized by the club's member list, you will gain access
4. Get Started - Once you have successfully gained access to the club, you can register for rides and view the Strava route maps get notifications such as ride updates and any ride cancellations

# Weather Policy

The Cobourg Cycling Club will cancel rides if there is a severe weather warning or lightning. Rain will not stop a ride in process, but it may keep a ride/event from starting.

Our Ride Leaders do their best to announce ride cancellations via the Cycle Club App 1-2 hours before the ride start time. Cobourg Cycling Club rides will be cancelled as an insured and sanctioned ride due to weather if:

- ❖ It is raining at the start of the ride
- ❖ There is a forecast of 70% POP or more of rain or lightning/ thunderstorms
- ❖ Extremely high winds or gusts (40km/h+) on the day of the ride
- ❖ The temperature (humidex value) is above 40°C
- ❖ If the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) is at 7 or above
- ❖ Please see our **Weather Policy** on the CCC website

A cancelled ride does not mean you cannot ride, it just means that we do not recommend you ride and that Ride Leaders will not be attending in that capacity. For safety reasons the Club cannot sanction it.



# Preparing to Ride

Prior to attending the ride;

- ❖ Register for the ride through the Cycle Club App, Strava route link will be posted for riders to review the route, any ride expectations will be posted in the app as well.
- ❖ Understand the Club's Policies, Risk Management Plan and emergency protocols posted on our website.
- ❖ Be self sufficient and bring your own food, hydration, spare tube and pump.
- ❖ Have a fully charged cell phone, ID, and CCC/OC membership card.
- ❖ Bring a few dollars for any impromptu stops for refreshments.
- ❖ Group rides can be learning or training rides, group speed is determined by the slowest rider. If you are not sure where you fit in, begin in a slower/easier group.
- ❖ Unless otherwise noted all group rides are "No Drop" rides.

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# During The Ride

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## **“Group Rides are group rides and not Races”**

- ❖ Rides are limited to no more than 12 - 15 riders.
- ❖ Ride Leaders may at their discretion split the ride into groups.
- ❖ All riders are expected to be familiar with the route.
- ❖ If for any reason a rider decides at any point to leave the ride they are required to notify the Ride Leader.
- ❖ No rider will be left behind due to ability unless the ride has been clearly designated as a DROP ride.
- ❖ If a rider is getting dropped, at least two riders will drop back and stay with them through the completion of the ride.
- ❖ All riders (when safe to do so) should look back frequently to ensure that the group is together and communicate gaps or struggling/dropped riders.
- ❖ Lead riders need to go deliberately slow off a light/start to avoid splits within the group and the back of the pack having to chase.
- ❖ Ride Leaders may suggest a rider join a different level of ride.



## Communication on the Ride

- ❖ Communication is essential on any group ride. Riders can communicate both verbally and with a variety of hand signals.
- ❖ Most hazards can be pointed out. The lead rider should guide the group steadily and carefully around any obstacles (no swerving or hopping). Follow the line of the rider ahead.
- ❖ All riders should be prepared/expected to communicate hazards to the other riders. However, riders should not be taking their hands off the handlebars to point out a hazard if they are uncomfortable doing so, risking their own/others safety.
- ❖ Kindly remind those riders in the group who are not pointing out hazards the necessity and importance of doing so.
- ❖ It is equally important for verbal communications from the back of the group to be relayed to the front riders.
- ❖ All riders are responsible for helping move the “call outs” through the group by repeating it for the person in front or behind. Example call outs;
  - **Car Back** - indicates that there is a car approaching from the rear of the group.
  - **Car Up** - indicates that there is a car approaching from the front of the group.
  - **Car Left/Car Right** - indicates that there is a car at the intersection that might cross your path.
  - **Right Turn/Left Turn** - indicates that the group will be turning and in what direction.
  - **Single File** - indicates single file formation is necessary.
  - **Double File** - indicates its a safe return to a social pace line.
  - **Hole** - indicates that riders need to be cautious and avoid potholes.
  - **Tracks** - indicates that riders need to be cautious of the railway tracks coming up.
  - **Easy** - indicates that riders need to gradually decrease the speed.
  - **Gap/Split** - indicates to the riders in front that there is a space opening within the group in order to adjust pace and bring the group back together.
  - **Mechanical/Flat** - *indicates that the riders need to slow and pull over to the right and completely off the road to assist with the mechanical.*
  - **Stopping** - indicates that you or the group is stopping. This call out should be made with as much advance notice as possible. The group should gear down and stop pedalling. Riders at the back should start breaking right away and riders toward the front should initially brake very gently. Move completely off the road when stopping.
  - **On Your Left** – indicates that you are passing or coming up to the left of the rider in front of you.
  - **Runner/Walker/Bike up** – indicates that there is a runner, walker or cyclist ahead of the group on the road or side of the road.
  - **Clear** – indicates that you approached an intersection, looked in all directions and there is no traffic. This means it is safe for you and the group to clear the intersection.

## The Highway Traffic Act

The Highway Traffic Act (HTA) does not state that a cyclist can or cannot ride two-abreast. It only states cyclists should ride as far to the right as practically possible.

Sometimes, pavement/road conditions are very rough on the right hand of the lane making riding there not “safe or practicable.” Groups should ride 1m from the ‘rideable’ right side of the road.

The rideable part of the road does not include curbs, sewers, gravel or uneven pavement.

Properly executed two-abreast riding has been used internationally for over half a century as a legitimate defensive cycling technique.

Section 148(2) of the HTA does suggest that the slower vehicles move to the right to allow the faster moving vehicles to pass. The slower vehicle should not impede or obstruct a faster vehicle from passing.

This may be interpreted to mean that all cyclists riding two abreast must move to single file riding every time a faster vehicle approaches to pass. However, this simply does not need to be done under normal riding conditions where the ride is predominantly on low traffic roads at low traffic times where the faster vehicles can pass easily without being obstructed by the double paceline.

During those instances where the ride finds itself in the position that the double paceline is impeding the progress of faster traffic, the group will proceed to single file formation.

We ride “tight to the right” and pass on the left.

The cycling community as a whole is likely to get more respect from drivers by demonstrating organized and lawful group rides.

Tight to the right means within a foot of the edge of the road, the shoulder of the rider beside you while maintaining a steady, consistent distance from the rider in front of you. Riders should be aware of their speed and position relative to the other riders to avoid half-wheeling and/or overlapping of wheels.

The term riding “bar-to-bar” is preferred over half-wheeling as it’s easier to visualize and understand.

## Pacelines

Riding in a group can help you conserve your energy, allowing you to ride longer and faster than riding alone.

A larger group of cyclists is more visible than a single rider on the road.

Riding in a group of experienced cyclists can help you improve your own riding skills and performance, not to mention the opportunity to meet new people and form new friendships.

**Pro-Tip** – hold your line, be predictable and stay in your spot, never brake suddenly, and never allow your front wheel to overlap the rear wheel of the rider in front of you, maintain a bar to bar position with the rider beside you.

The Cobourg Cycling Club uses two methods of riding within the “tight to the right” formation.

These methods are known as the Single Paceline and Double/Social Paceline.

For intermediate and advanced rides the Rotating Pacelines will be implemented at the discretion of the Ride Leader.

During Rotating Pacelines the rotations should be smooth and steady with no sudden surges or fluctuations in speed.

Riders not participating in the rotation should sit a full bike length back and call out to the riders ahead that they are not pulling through.

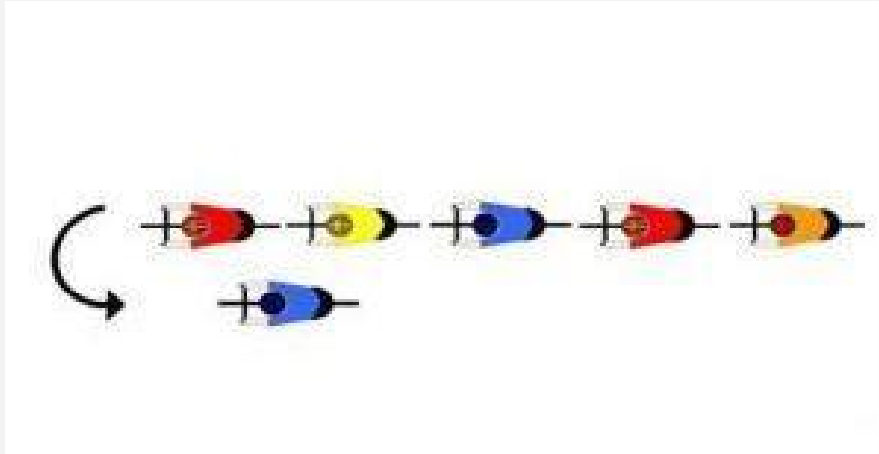
The Ride Leader will call out the appropriate method of formation for the group dictated by the environment and circumstances.

Pacelines do have some inherent danger and require constant communication among the riders (see Communication Section – Verbal and Non-Verbal). Please ride within your limits.

Ride expectations will be discussed or posted before each ride.



## Single Paceline



This is the most basic formation and best suited for small groups of about a half dozen riders. It consists of one line of riders, each riding about a foot (depending on the comfort and experience of the group) from the wheel in front of them. Each rider takes their turn at the front and then pulls off to the side and drifts to the back of the line.

Used anytime the road narrows to a single lane whether by road design or parked cars

When switching from a double to single paceline, the left rider should tuck in safely ahead of the right rider all the way down the line. Riders on the left side of the Social Paceline will move forward and ahead of their partners.

Rotations happen in a clockwise manner as per the Highway Traffic Act which specifies passing on the left.

Pay attention to the group's average speed and effort and maintain those levels when you're at the front. Try not to make any sudden surges or increase in speed, remain smooth and steady.

Stay off the brakes and keep your pedals turning as much as possible. Make incremental adjustments in your speed as necessary by soft-peddalling, feathering the brakes lightly to scrub speed, and sitting up or shifting over slightly to catch a bit of wind.

Establish a range—two to three minutes is a good norm for how long each person should stay at the front.

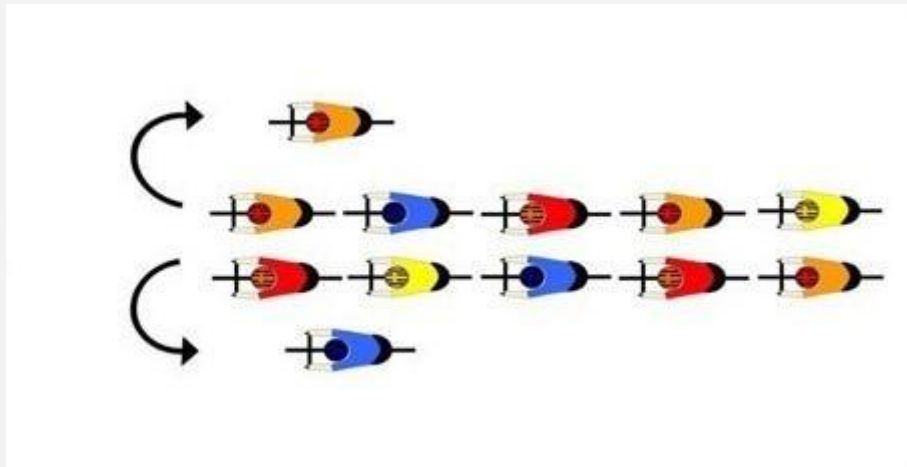
Continue pedalling and stay close to the line as you pull off and drift back so as to not lose all momentum and lose the back of the pack.

Keep your eyes forward. Look through the riders ahead of you, rather than staring at the wheel directly in front of your own. That way, you can naturally adjust to changes in terrain, rather than reacting (or overreacting) to the rider right in front of you.

Call out obstacles in the road. Always call out potholes and other obstacles so everyone is alert and has time to react.

Flick your elbow to signal you're pulling off; this lets the riders behind you know you're about to drift over and back.

## Double Paceline



This formation works best for larger riding groups. The rules are the same as for the single paceline, only now you are riding two-up. The front riders take their pull, then drift off to their respective sides of the pack as riders behind them pull through.

You'll face the same hurdles you would in the single paceline, with the additional challenge of the front riders maintaining the same pace side by side without half-wheeling (riding just in front of the rider next to you). This disrupts the rhythm of the pack and is considered bad form. There's less room for error in a larger, tighter formation.

All the rules of single-paceline riding apply here. In a double, you should also take care to:

Think shoulder-to-shoulder. Stay in line with the rider next to you, especially at the front, by keeping your shoulders in line.

When rotating, the lead rider in the slower line should yell "Clear" when it is safe for the left rider to move into position in front of their wheel and "Last wheel" to the back right rider about to switch lines.

Pull off in sync at a safe place. Be mindful that the left-hand rider will be pulling off toward the edge of the road. Work together at the front and agree on good pull-off points that give you and everyone in the pack the room they need to negotiate. Also pull off together so nobody has to surge to fill an unexpected gap at the front.

**Riders not participating in the rotation should sit a full bike length back and call out to the riders ahead that they are not pulling through.**

## Rotating Paceline



This is an advanced variation of the double paceline: Both lines are in constant, circular rotation, with the inside line moving faster than the outside line.

No one rider pulls for any length of time in this formation. Rather, when you are the front rider on the inside, faster line, you start drifting left as soon as the rider in front of you has moved left and has drifted back one bike length. Then, you soft-pedal back, and the next front rider drifts to the left-hand line. When you hit the back of the left-hand, slower line, you drift right into the slightly faster line.

This formation is considerably more challenging to execute smoothly than the single and double paceline.

The biggest pitfall comes when there is a huge disparity in speed and effort between the two lines, so riders find themselves forced to make repeated punchy efforts to keep up with the faster line, which wastes rather than conserves energy.

Pay attention to pedal pressure. The trick to maintaining a rotating paceline is to pay very close attention to the pressure you're putting on your pedals. You should feel like you're pedaling consistently and normally as you work your way up the right-hand side and are soft-pedaling as you retreat down the left-hand side. If riders in the advancing line start surging to the front, the effort will become unsustainable for a long ride.

When rotating, the lead rider in the slower line should yell "Clear" when it is safe for the left rider to move into position in front of their wheel and "Last wheel" to the back right rider about to switch lines.

**Riders not participating in the rotation should sit a full bike length back and call out to the riders ahead that they are not pulling through.**

## During the Ride Miscellaneous

- ❖ Always pass “On the Left” and notify rider being passed by calling out “On the Left”
- ❖ Do not cut in front of the rider you have passed, make sure your wheel is clear and ease back in
- ❖ Do not engage with angry drivers, allow the ride leader to handle the situation.

## Stopping at Stop Signs/Stop Lights

- ❖ We operate as a single vehicle and come to a full stop at all stop signs. Do not swarm at stop signs or stop lights, the group should maintain its single or double line formation and not spread out to take up the whole width of the lane.
- ❖ Follow the “eight-second rule:” if the countdown timer is estimated to reach seven by the time the group is at the line, the group should stop; if it’s at nine or above the group continues through the light
- ❖ There is no point of the group filtering to the front alongside traffic only to hold others up—it is bad etiquette. The group should hold their position within the line.

## Railway Crossings

- ❖ All riders should be versed in proper protocol for crossing at railway crossings
- ❖ Tracks can be slippery when wet or dry.
- ❖ The group should adjust the speed prior to crossing the tracks.
- ❖ Call (verbal) out “Tracks” and use the hand signal to warn the riders behind you that the group is approaching the railway crossing and the change in speed..
- ❖ Always cross tracks at a right angle (do a shoulder check for traffic first)
- ❖ Ride within your comfort level and dismount and walk your bike.
- ❖ Be aware that all metal/painted surfaces such as bridges, sewers, and the painted services at crosswalks/intersections can become incredibly slippery when wet.

## Stopping for Mechanical, Emergency Vehicles, Regrouping

- ❖ Reduce speed in a controlled manner, moving completely off the road and clear of any intersections.
- ❖ Inside line of the paceline stops first with the outside line slowing to a stop in front of the inside line.

## Accidents

- ❖ Crashes do happen and are an unfortunate part of cycling/group riding.
- ❖ The group stops completely off the road.
- ❖ The Ride Leader is to follow the club's Emergency Action Plan.
- ❖ Care for anyone who is injured.
- ❖ DO NOT attempt to treat a serious medical emergency on site unless you are suitably qualified/trained.
- ❖ If a rider drops off due to a mechanical, health issue or accident, at least two riders will drop back and stay with them to assist
- ❖ Know when to call 9-1-1.
- ❖ If the rider is unconscious, call 911 immediately and remain with them until EMS arrives.
- ❖ See the **CCC's Concussion Policy** on our website.
- ❖ If a rider has a suspected concussion, the Ride Leader must notify the Board and other Ride Leaders
- ❖ Please take note of the time and location, light, weather and road conditions and collect witness contact information.
- ❖ The Ride Leader must ensure they fill out the **OC's Sport Injury Report Form** (within 5 days of the initial incident)
- ❖ The OC's Sport Injury Report Form is used to report injuries of members while participating in OC sanctioned activities.
- ❖ The Ride Leader will notify the Board and submit all forms/information regarding the incident according to the club's reporting protocols.

## Insurance

- ❖ All Club Members are covered by General Liability Insurance.
- ❖ Sports Accident Insurance is structured to provide a core level of coverage and benefits
- ❖ Members can purchase additional coverage through the Sport Accident Extension Program for an additional fee to extend the Sport Accident coverage.
- ❖ The Sport Accident Extension Program allows OC members to purchase additional 24/7 Sport Accident medical benefit coverage based on the type of riding they are doing.
- ❖ Link to OC insurance program: <https://ontariocycling.org/membership/>
- ❖ This coverage is secondary to any other health care plan(s).
- ❖ A sanctioned event: defined as an organized group ride which is documented prior to the date of the event and on file with the OC. Participants of the ride must be on the member list file with the insuring company
- ❖ If an incident and/or accident occurs, it must be documented and recorded immediately.
- ❖ If there is personal injury or property damage the Board and OC must be notified immediately.
- ❖ No coverage is provided for alcohol/narcotic related injuries. If a ride finishes with alcohol consumption, the ride is considered officially ended and is no longer a sanctioned ride.