



# Ride Out Guidelines

On group rides it's necessary for all involved to understand that an individual's actions can affect the safety of other group members. Group rides are not for the selfish. Group members must be prepared to give some thought and consideration to the safety of others, and enjoyment of all.

Remember that **YOUR** safety is ultimately **YOUR OWN** responsibility.

On ride-outs, we want everyone to ride safely and within their abilities at all times. To avoid the need for anyone to have to ride outside their skill level, in order to keep up with the bikes in front, we use the "**second man drop-off**" technique to signpost the route taken by the ride-out. For smaller rides (less than 20) we also use the "**Buddy system**" i.e. mark a junction yourself if you cannot see the bike immediately behind you.

There is a **no-overtaking protocol** within the group on ride-outs, again for safety reasons. This means that, after setting out from each stop, riders should keep to a fixed running order and a safe distance, no matter how slow the rider in front of them may be. A group ride-out is not a race and the overall pace must be set to cater all Members.

Please also note that overtaking riders on the inside is extremely dangerous and illegal and should never be attempted under any circumstances.

However, as well as observing speed limits there is also the need to ride at a minimum safe speed. Doing 30mph on the motorway is not safe! Another example is travelling at @ 58-63mph is also not safe on a motorway or dual carriageway as this is the limited speed of HGV's etc!! As a guideline we will aim to ride at @ 68mph on the motorway and 45-60mph on an A road, depending on the road conditions.

## Preparation – (Every time you go out on your motorcycle)

1. Before leaving home check your bike is roadworthy e.g. tyres and for any obvious faults e.g. oil leaks, lights not working etc. If found not to be roadworthy you will be asked to leave the ride out.
2. Check that your personal safety gear is legal. If found to be of a deficient standard you will be asked to leave the ride out.
3. Check the weather forecast and dress appropriately, always carry waterproof clothing. The Road Captain will announce before the ride leaves if wet weather is forecast and waterproof clothing is advised. If so, we will not stop during the ride to change in to waterproofs.
4. Arrive at meeting point 20-30 minutes before the scheduled departure time to allow you to say hello to everyone and hear the briefing.
5. Ensure you arrive with a **full tank** of petrol.
6. New and inexperienced riders should speak to the Road Captain(s) prior to departure
7. Depending on the number, new and inexperienced Riders will set off in the first group followed by a 10 minute interval for all other riders.
8. All Ride outs, when appropriate, will be split into groups by the Road Captain(s). Each group will have a Lead Marshall and Sweeper.
9. If you intend to the leave the group during the ride, inform the Lead Road Captain/Marshall **prior to** setting off.

## The Ride Out

1. The Road Captain(s) will be assisted throughout the ride out by nominated Road Marshals who will be wearing Hi Viz Vests.
2. We will use the **second man drop off** method to mark all junctions /roundabouts where the group is exiting left or right. A drop off will be signaled by the Road Captain/Marshall as the place to stop.
3. If a junction is not manned then the ride will continue straight on.
4. A Road Marshall, acting in the role of Sweeper, will ride at the back of the group. All second man drops offs or Riders who have stopped are to rejoin the group and go in front of the Sweeper.

5. All Riders in addition to Marshalls may be required to do and should be capable of doing second man drop off.
6. During the ride out we will obey all speed limits and traffic regulations.
7. While riding in formation maintain the 2 second rule between you and the rider immediately in front and 1 second between you and rider in your inside/outside.
8. We will maintain the staggered riding formation (one nearside – one offside) wherever possible; this allows the group to remain tight but gives enough room for manoeuvres where necessary.
9. Riders should try, as much as possible, to maintain a steady speed. Any need for acceleration or slowing down should be carried out as smoothly as possible to reduce any 'accordion' effect within the group.
10. Once you have occupied a position within the group (i.e. nearside or offside) this position should not change except when riding on a particularly narrow road or if it is obvious that everyone in front of you has changed position. Remember the 2 second rule and maintain a safe distance.
11. In narrow roads the Road Captain will signal when to ride in single formation. This will be indicated with the left arm and index finger extended straight up. This signal should be passed down the group.
12. Conversely if the Road Captain wants to reform the staggered formation this will be indicated with the left arm raised and two fingers extended straight up. This signal should be passed down the group.
13. All changes in formation are to be actioned from the front. Do not try and second guess the Rider in front of you.
14. Changing position should only be performed when safe to do so. (Note that crossing over from inside to outside staggered riding position (or visa versa) can be very hazardous if the gaps between riders are too short. Remember the 2 second rule and maintain a safe distance.
15. If a Rider pulls out of the group and this causes a gap when riding in staggered formation. DO NOT change position. Maintain your position with the gap.
16. Do not overtake, only Road Marshals should overtake other riders in the group and only in the case of an emergency.
17. Check your mirrors often.
18. If you need to stop during the ride, pull safely in to the left when possible and indicate (Thumb down) to the first Marshall you see if you have a problem. They will pull in and assist. If you do not have a problem, indicate with the thumb up signal. The Marshall will not stop.
19. On Motorways and Dual Carriageways, at times the group will need to overtake. When the Road Captain signals to pull out, this does not mean that the rest of the group has to pull out and do the same at exactly the same time. This is dangerous and also causes congestion. Wait in the nearside lane until you personally encounter the obstruction, then overtake when it is safe for **YOU** to do so. Then join the main pack. Do not pull out before the bike in front to block traffic.
20. When the group is held up or stops, riders should close up side by side so that the group occupies the minimum length of road necessary. This is especially beneficial in built-up areas in getting as many bikes through a junction or traffic light sequence in as short an interval of time as possible.
21. The Road Captain and Sweeper will ride in a central position within the lane/road, so that they can see each other along the central gully between the other riders in the column.
22. We will not stop for bad weather, unless unsafe to carry on, until the next designated stop point.
23. If you ride a bike that is equipped with a radio/cassette/CD etc please be considerate of the riders around you who may not share your taste in music, i.e. when riding in a group please switch off the speakers.



## In summary

Remember that **YOUR safety is ultimately YOUR OWN responsibility.**

The group ride is supposed to be fun and enjoyable for everyone. We ride together because it is part of our chosen hobby. It looks good when we ride safely like a well oiled machine. Follow the rules, turn some heads and above all, enjoy yourself.

The Road Captains and Marshalls will do everything they can to prepare for the ride and make it safe for everyone. Safety is not just the jurisdiction of the Road Captains and Marshalls it is a joint responsibility of all chapter members.

As previously stated, group riding is not for the selfish, it's not a race so **DON'T CHASE THE RIDER AHEAD**. But **DO KEEP THE RIDER BEHIND IN VIEW** at all times (Buddy System). If contact with following riders is lost - slow down and/or stop (where it is safe to do so) and wait. The rider in front of you should then also slow/stop until the Road Captain realises there is a problem and will stop at a place where the group can reform safely before continuing.

Develop a safe attitude and ride with pride. Maintain a good margin of safety at all times, whether it be the gap between riders, the distance from opposing traffic, keeping within the capabilities of machine, rider and observing all speed limits. Overtaking opportunities should be taken as they are presented but, if in doubt, hold back.

Remember that **YOUR safety is ultimately YOUR OWN responsibility.**

**YOU ARE DEEMED TO BE IN CONTROL OF AND RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR VEHICLE AND YOUR RIDING AT ALL TIMES IRRESPECTIVE OF ANY GUIDANCE OR INSTRUCTION FROM ANY MEMBER OF THE ROAD CREW. YOU MUST AT ALL TIMES, RIDE WITHIN THE LAW AND OBEY ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATIONS.**

*Ride Safe, Ride Free and Enjoy!*

*The Road Captains*