



London Cycling Club

Members Handbook



4th Edition
2018

www.londoncyclingclub.ca

Welcome to the London Cycling Club.

The London Cycling Club is a volunteer-based non-profit organization for recreational bicycling based in London, Ontario, Canada. We have been in operation since 1971.

We are a touring club, and our members use human powered road bicycles to ride distances from 45 km to 130 km on a morning ride, with average speeds from 20 km/h to 35 km/h.

Our rides are organized into groups of about 8 to 12 members according to a combination of average speed and distance. Riding in a group allows members to meet and converse with others, save energy (particularly when the wind is not in favor), and makes for a more positive experience on the roads. And, if a member suffers an accident, flat tire or any other problem, there will be other members in the group willing and able to help.

In this handbook, the terms “members” and “riders” are used interchangeably. Both terms apply to those who have registered with the London Cycling Club and are members in good standing.

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Introduction

The Board of Directors has prepared this Members Handbook to help inform members, both new and veteran, with the structure of London Cycling Club (LCC) rides. Members are required to familiarize themselves with this handbook, including the ride lengths and expected speeds, as well as expected behaviors and equipment requirements. In addition to this handbook, members are also required to familiarize themselves with and abide by all of the LCC's internal documents, including the Risk Management Plan and the Bylaws and Policies Manual. By reading and understanding this handbook, the hope is that rides are enjoyable for you and the rest of the group.

Traffic Laws

In addition to understanding the LCC's internal documents, members are required to have knowledge of the [Ontario Highway Traffic Act](#), especially the rules as it pertains to cyclists.

It is in each member's own interest to obey traffic laws and follow the rules of the road. It only takes a few inconsiderate cyclists to create a negative perception of cyclists among the general public, whether they are an LCC member or not. LCC members are encouraged to do their part to create a positive perception of cyclists through their actions and attitudes.

Weekly Rides

The LCC hosts rides for its members on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, traditionally from April through October. There is usually a weekend destination ride held in May or June.

The essential information for each ride, including start location, start time, and destination is posted on the [LCC website](#). From time to time, it may be necessary to rearrange the routes due to construction or special events; however, the routes won't be modified after the weekly newsletter is sent via email. Any changes after that time will be mentioned at the start location.

Members are required to know the route they plan on riding that given day. For each ride, members should print out the route map, have a turn by turn direction sheet, or download the maps onto their personal GPS device or cell phone. In the event that members get separated from the main group on any ride, they will be able to follow the remainder of the route and return to the finishing point of the ride independently.

Please arrive at least 15 minutes before the scheduled start time. Before the ride starts, a Ride Coordinator will ask that members separate into groups (typically short, medium short, medium long and long). The Ride Coordinator will also discuss the days' route, give any known road hazards or construction concerns, and give any other club announcements.

Rides are structured such that each group (short, medium short, medium long and long) travels to the same general area, and follows the same route for approximately the first 1/3rd of the ride. If a rider is struggling in their group and they wish to drop back to another group, this is an opportunity to do that. In doing so, riders must understand the route prior to leaving the starting point, have knowledge that there is another group coming behind them, and notify the group they are riding with what their intentions are.

There is a break halfway through the ride, which is a good time to get something to eat, drink, converse, go to the washroom, or make any other adjustments, either personal or to the bike. Riders can forego this break but should inform others who they were riding with of their intentions.

Holiday or Special Tour Rides

On holiday Mondays, the LCC typically holds rides starting from a remote location 40-60 km outside of London. These rides allow members to experience different terrain, scenery, and rest stop locations. Special Tour rides are similar, and may include an overnight component. Details about these rides and their start locations will be posted on the LCC website and communicated through emails. As there are typically fewer members who participate in these rides, the number of groups is fewer as well. Those present should reach a consensus on the speed of the ride.

Cancellation of a Ride

The LCC uses [The Weather Network - London](#) to determine whether the weather is suitable for riding. LCC rides are cancelled under the following conditions:

- The probability of precipitation is 70% or greater;
- If lightning is present at the start location;
- If a Severe Weather Warning is called for at the start location and the ride destination.

Each of these conditions is for the start time of the ride. If the conditions are scheduled to change a half hour later, the ride is still cancelled. Members typically will not be notified if the ride is cancelled, and are advised to follow the guidelines above.

Ride Preparation

For any LCC sanctioned rides, riders must:

- Abide by all LCC Bylaws and Policies, as well as this handbook;
- Wear an approved helmet as per the Cycling Canada insurance program;
- Know the route before leaving the starting point;
- Carry identification and a note with at least one name and phone number of a person to call in case of an emergency.

All riders are strongly encouraged to:

- Wear proper cycling clothing which will provide greater comfort, including cycling gloves, cycling shorts, cycling jerseys, and any other clothing suitable for the weather;
- Carry the following items:
 - Enough money for snacks/drinks along the way, as well as for a cab ride home in case of an injury, flat tire, or mechanical breakdown;
 - Eye protection (such as glasses or sunglasses);
 - Sunscreen;
 - First Aid kit;
 - Food for energy;
 - A sufficient supply of liquids;
 - Cell phone.

Bikes are required to have the following:

- A tool kit, which includes as a minimum one spare inner tube, a patch kit, tire levers, a frame pump and know how to put it all to use;
- A speedometer, to know the speed while riding;
- A bell, as required by the Highway Traffic Act;
- A light, which may help to make vehicles aware of your presence.

The LCC does not permit the following items on LCC sanctioned rides:

- Headphones / earphones;
- Aero bars;
- Kickstands.

Picking Your Group

New members should start with the shorter distance groups and move up as they get stronger, more proficient and more confident riding in groups. If you need help deciding which group to pick, ask the Ride Coordinator, a Board Member, or a veteran member for advice.

The groups are formed based on average speed and distance. When choosing a group based on riding speed, it is important to know your average speed. The best way of knowing this is to have a speedometer on your bike. It is important to note that cycling through the city drops the average speed considerably due to slower speeds and frequent stopping.

Use the following as a guide:

Group Name	Average Speed (km/h)	Uphill Speed (km/h)	Ride Distance (km)
Short	18 – 23	<18	40 – 70
Medium Short	23 – 28	15 – 20	60 – 90
Medium Long	26 – 32	18 – 23	75 – 110
Long	28+	20 – 25	75 – 140

There is some flexibility in these groups. For instance, if you wish to ride a longer distance at a slower pace, and can find a group willing to do so, you are welcome to. However, communicate with the rest of the members of your intentions prior to leaving the starting location.

New to Group Riding

Riding in a group is a new experience for a lot of people, and not everyone is comfortable with riding close to the person in front or having someone that close behind. If you are not used to riding in a group, you should start out by leaving a gap of approximately one bike length between you and the rider in front of you. Though this is not very efficient at first, as your skills and confidence grow, you should begin to close the gap. Otherwise, if you are not used to riding with a group, you may want to stay at the back until you feel comfortable. Please communicate in the group if you are uncomfortable and more experienced riders may offer some tips or strategies to maintain contact with the group.

In-Between Groups?

If you find yourself in-between groups, not quite a slow medium but not a fast medium, then go out with the slower group and work on strength. Take longer turns at the front (other riders will appreciate it and you'll get stronger). Work on keeping a steady pace into the wind. Go back and get a tired rider and bring them back to the group. There is likely someone else in the group who is also feeling like you so work together. Work on technique and strengthening your weak areas.

Be honest about your riding ability — don't bite off more than you can chew. You will get the most pleasure out of group riding if you go out with people who have the same goals for the day and ride at the same pace as you.

Group Leaders

Group Leaders are generally experienced members of the LCC riding with that particular group. Group Leaders work to keep the groups to a safe size and moving effectively. Group Leaders may also provide other members with useful tips and advice if / where appropriate. Group Leaders also advise members of unsafe riding practices.

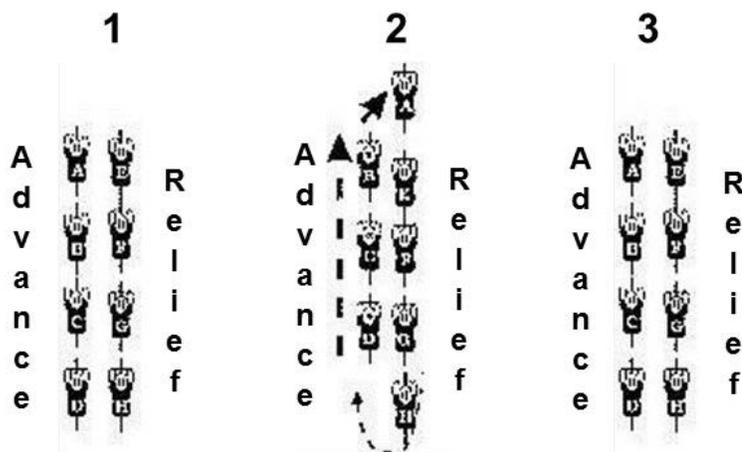
All members are expected to follow to the information outlined in this handbook, and by default, all members should be prepared to show leadership skills in the group they ride in – the safety of all members is dependent on everyone sharing responsibility for safety and courteous riding.

Riding Formations

The LCC rides in two formations; the double paceline and single file. The double paceline is used on most roads, as it makes the group more compact in length and permits conversation. The single file formation is often used on busier roads. Both formations are explained below.

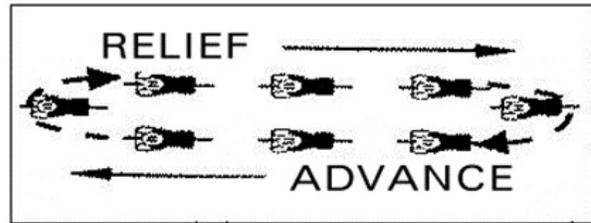
Double Paceline

The most efficient way of riding in a group is to ride in a double paceline. In this formation, two lines ride side by side, one meter or less apart. The rider on the right sets the line and the rider on the left sets the pace. The rider on the right should be half a meter from the edge of the road so as not to crowd the group onto the shoulder.



While the group maintains a certain speed, the left front (advance) rider increases their speed slightly to move up and across in front of the right front (relief) rider. The right front calls out "clear" when the left front rider is clear to come across to the relief position. The remaining riders in

the advance line move ahead while maintaining their speed and the remaining riders on the relief line fall back one place. The rear rider of the relief group moves over to the left to become the rear rider of the advance group.



The key to getting a rotation working properly is not staying at the head of the advance line for too long before moving over to the relief line. The timing of the rotation is determined by the two lead riders who yell “rotate” while using the appropriate hand symbol as well.

Riders should ensure there is no one else coming up from behind before moving over. The speeds you reach in such a group can be exhilarating but it takes good bike handling skills to pull it off safely. When riding into a strong wind, it is recommended that rotations happen quite often so that the lead riders do not tire.

Done properly, riding in a double paceline can save a significant amount of effort, with estimates showing it is about 30% harder pulling in front than drafting behind another rider.

Single File

Traffic and road conditions dictate when to ride single file. If motorists are experiencing difficulty passing the group because of heavy and continuous traffic in the opposite direction, the group leader will decide whether conditions merit changing to single file.

The key factor is the width of the roadway. It may be safer to hold up traffic if there is insufficient width for motorists to pass comfortably. Riding single file may not benefit either cyclists or motorists - it doubles the length of the group and this could make passing more hazardous because of poor sight distances. Although it is important to try to accommodate the needs of other road users, riders’ safety must never be compromised.

When single file is called, the inside riders put two bike lengths between them and the bike in front. The outside riders then move in ahead of the rider on the right. As soon as the heavy traffic has passed, the group should revert to double file. The LCC typically will not ride on roads where single file riding is required for long stretches; thus, passing while in single file is discouraged.

Communicating in the Group

When riding in a group, it is important to constantly be communicating. Sometimes it is easy to lose track of conditions while in a conversation, but a little communication goes a long way to prevent accidents and mechanical incidents. The following table is a list of common calls / gestures when coming across obstacles in a group:

Obstacle	Verbal Call	Additional Gesture / Instructions
Hole, crack, glass	“Hole”	Point to it and gently navigate around it
Gravel	“Gravel”	Point to it and gently navigate around it
Railroad tracks	“Tracks”	Swing your hand behind your lower back (like

		windshield wiper). If safe, cross tracks at a perpendicular angle
Moving cars	“Car up”, “car back”, “car left” etc.	Safely move to the right
Pedestrians, slower cyclists	“On your left...thank you”	Ring bike bell in advance of passing
Slowing, stopping	“slowing”, “stopping”	Put your hand down to your side, with your palm facing the rider behind.
Speed bumps	“Bump”	Point to it; consider standing up over it.
Rotate	“Rotate”	Hand up in air, spinning fingers. Rider on left gradually moves ahead
Turning left	“Left turn ahead”	Look over shoulder and stick out left hand
Turning right	“Right turn ahead”	Look over shoulder and stick out right hand

Group Riding Ethics and Tips

Riding in a group has its benefits, but it also has its responsibilities. Riders should be respectful and considerate for others when group riding. Riders of all experience levels should keep in mind the following:

- Keep the groups to a reasonable size, no more than 8 – 12 riders.
 - Take a moment to know who is in your group before you leave the start, or when the group is at a stop sign or quiet stretch of road.
- Keep an eye on each other.
 - If someone is suddenly missing, the group should wait or go back.
 - If you decide to leave or drop out of a group, let others know so they don't go looking for you.
- Groups should be minimum 200 m apart, especially while leaving London.
 - For reference, 200 m is 25-30 seconds from the back of the group ahead to the front of the following group.
- Rotate at regular intervals, especially on hot days or windy weather.
- When climbing a hill, the lead riders should slow the pace down after reaching the top.
 - Last riders to the top should yell “Back on” once they have caught up.
- At stop signs and intersections, after stopping, every cyclist should decide for themselves whether the way is clear or not. (“Clear!” for the first cyclist is no guarantee for the last cyclist.)
 - After crossing the intersection, the group should be all together prior to resuming previous speed. Sometimes traffic volume or traffic lights timing may not allow all members to cross at once.
 - The last riders in the group should yell “Back on” once they have caught up.
- Never ride through red lights.
 - If you are at the back of the group when the light changes to red, please stop. The group should wait for you on the other side or ride slowly so that you will be able to catch up.
 - The last riders should yell “Back on” once they have caught up.
- Never let your front wheel overlap the rear wheel of the rider ahead.
 - If a rider ahead suddenly turns you will likely be taken down.
- Don't stare at the wheel in front of you; look at the road ahead of you.

- Always have your hands close to your brakes so that you can react quickly.
- Call out any dangerous activity by riders in the group.
 - By not telling a rider what he or she is doing wrong, you are endangering everyone in the group, compromising everyone's enjoyment, and not helping the rider to improve.
 - Conversely, be receptive to feedback from your fellow riders.
- If you are tired, drop off to the back of the group and stay there for a rest by skipping a rotation or two.
 - If you are still tired, ask the group to slow down if you feel they are going too fast for the groups' designated speed range.
 - If you find that on every ride you have to ask the group to slow down, you should probably join a slower group.
- Never leave a tired rider alone unless you are confident another group is close behind or that the rider can get home under his or her own power.
 - Ensure that the group has communicated with that rider.
- Try to keep an even gap — don't yo-yo back and forth. Stay relaxed.
- Keep speeds under 20 km/h on City of London pathways.
 - When approaching slower path users, sound your bell and call out "on your left", then pass on the left when safe to do so. Say "Thank you" if you can.
- Show courtesy to motorists, pedestrians, and other cyclists.
- Keep out of right turn lanes when going straight or turning left.
- Slow the pace over rough roads.

These points all relate to common sense riding and, on most occasions, all should go smoothly. All riders within the group should be able to remind each other of these rules in order to improve group riding techniques. Should anyone refuse to adhere to these rules after a few polite requests, please report this rider to any Board Member.

Riding Uphill

The riders in front should concentrate on maintaining a smooth steady effort up the hill, not necessarily a steady speed, while keeping a consistent line. Pass with caution! If you want to pass, check behind you that there is no traffic, and then call out "passing" and only pass on the left. If you know you are generally slower than the others in your group on hills, stay on the right, so that other faster climbers can pass you easily. By doing this, if the group is climbing faster than you, the other members can pass you gradually and you may still be able to hang on to the rear of the group.

Riding Downhill

On the downhill, you should spread out a bit. The riders in front should keep pedaling. Riders behind will have to ride the brakes very lightly or sit up a bit in the air stream to avoid overtaking the rider in front. Keep it smooth and predictable, and tighten up the group again at the bottom. Some riders tend to coast downhill quicker than others, but avoid riding more than two across.

Illness, Injury, Concussion, or Exhaustion Response

In the case of an incident where a rider is not able to continue a ride due to an illness, injury, concussion, or exhaustion, the rider will receive care and consideration from the rest of the

group that is reasonable to offer.

In response to an illness or injury the group will:

- Offer First Aid within their level of knowledge, ability and training, with the rider's permission or ask that another qualified individual administer First Aid.
- Attempt to notify emergency response services if the health incident is serious or if there is reason to suspect that the health incident may become serious. If in doubt, call 911.
- One or more members should offer to escort an ill or injured rider back to the starting point of the ride if the rider opts to and is able to continue.
- Confirm that the injured or ill rider is accepting responsibility for themselves if the member opts to return without the group.
- Notify the LCC of the incident and provide the details required to complete an [OCA Incident Report](#)

In response to an accident where the rider hits their head, a concussion should be suspected and the Concussion Protocol as outlined in the Bylaws and Policies Manual must be followed.

Any injury or suspected concussion requires an [OCA Incident Report](#) to be filled out. Those reports are to be emailed to londoncyclingclubinfo@gmail.com as soon as possible for OCA insurance coverage purposes.

In the case of rider exhaustion, the other riders must ensure that a reasonable plan is in place so that the rider can return safely to the starting point or a mutually agreed location where the rider can get any additional help from others.

Mechanical Issues Response

All riders are expected to carry a basic tool kit and have the ability to perform basic mechanical repairs, such as changing a tire.

If a rider has a mechanical failure, the group should stop and wait until the rider either fixes the mechanical failure, or deems the problem to be irreparable. In such case, then the rider or someone from the group should attempt to notify a party to pick them up, and provide an accurate location of the rider, or ensure that another reasonable plan is in place so that the rider can return safely to the starting point of the ride.

Conclusion

The London Cycling Club wants all its members to have a safe and enjoyable cycling experience. If you have any questions or concerns about any item in this handbook, please contact a Board Member or the LCC at londoncyclingclubinfo@gmail.com.

“Life is a beautiful ride!”