



CUCC Group Riding Handbook 2024-2025

Group riding is a brilliant way to get more out of the sport of cycling, make new friends and improve your fitness! We put together this 'handbook' to help new and more experienced cyclists become familiar with group riding.

Club Ride Information:

- Where? **Brookside** (CB2 1EN), next to Lensfield Road Cycles.
- When? **9 AM** meet on Saturdays and Sundays, for a **9:10 AM** prompt leave. Green rides are scheduled for **Sundays only**.
- What to bring? **Helmet**, water, food, money, puncture repair kit, appropriate clothing and bike!
 - Red and black group riders should be self-sufficient (repair their own punctures, water/food, capable of navigating back to Cambridge solo).
 - Purple, Blue and green riders should attempt to be self-sufficient, but will be led by more experienced members of the club who can help with any issues.
- Groups -
 - **Green** - our 'beginner' level ride, ~ 20 kph avg. or less for ~ 1 hour, with a café stop! '**No-drop**'
 - **Blue** - ~ 25 kph avg, 50 km '**No-drop**'
 - **Purple** -- 27kph avg, 60km '**No-drop**'
 - **Red** - ~ 30 kph avg, 90 km
 - **Black** - ~ 32 kph avg, 100 km
- Sign-up on the spreadsheet
- Group sizes - these will be capped to a maximum of 10 riders.

The Basics:

The GCN videos linked below outline the benefits of group riding and some of the skills required - they're all very quick and easy to pick up!

Tips: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPXijlKgFVM>

Etiquette: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ODmB9LyYzKM>

Hand signals: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=prYMM7D2qF8>

Key Points:

- **Communicate:** Be vocal and clear with hand/voice signals
- If in doubt, slow down - e.g. approaching a tight bend, rough road surface etc.
- Stop/slow down and look at every junction - don't assume it'll be clear
- Try to be self-sufficient - don't rely on others to bail you out each time!
- Use the spreadsheet

CUCC-specific:

- **Be vocal** - if riders have been dropped or someone has a mechanical issue within the group, let other riders know, and pass this on to the ride leader. The group should slow and wait by the side of the road. **Safety is paramount** - prioritise safe navigation of road obstacles and not the pace of the group.
- **Don't overlap wheels** with the rider in front of you. If in doubt you should leave a slightly larger gap so you have more time to react to anything.
- **Slow down** - if riding on the front, slow down through villages and narrow lanes with parked cars etc. until onto clearer, more open roads. This avoids potentially dangerous situations and ensures the group does not 'string out' into a long line or split apart.
- Group rides are first and foremost a social experience - it is important that riders keep in mind that the **safety of the group is paramount**.
- **Be predictable** - Try not to do anything unexpected as this can cause a rider behind/next to you to not be able to react fast enough to the sudden change and may hit you/crash. If you have to make a sudden change make sure you shout so people around you know what you're doing.
- Tight corners should be taken at a steady pace - the 'elastic band effect' in a group means any sharp changes of speed or direction become amplified through the group, so try and be as smooth as possible!
- **Self-sufficiency** - each rider in ride groups blue, red and black should be capable of fixing their own punctures and basic mechanical problems, and able to navigate (e.g. by mobile phone) their way back to Cambridge in the unlikely event they lose the group. The green group riders should also aim to be self-sufficient, but experienced ride leaders will be on-hand to help with any problems.
- **Ask for advice!** We are fortunate at CUCC that we have many experienced cyclists within the club - if you're unsure how to fix something or have any kit-related questions for example, we encourage you to ask any of our friendly members on our group chat.
- 'Black ride smashes' - Cambridgeshire has wide and open roads which are ideal for when the group wants to push the pace. It is important that riders in the group do not increase the pace on winding and narrow roads and villages, and take into account the weather conditions also. Roads such as: Balsham-Fulbourn, the Fens, Chapel Hill and Gog Magog are great examples of hills and/or wide, safe roads which can be taken at a higher pace.

Ride Captain Contact Details:

Feel free to drop us a message with any questions!

Evan Burgess (Magdalene) - eb984@cam.ac.uk

Gracie Wilson (Jesus) - gmw39@cam.ac.uk