

GROUP RIDING TECHNIQUES

written by

Dave Hansen

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Group Riding Techniques

The author welcomes you to the enjoyment of group riding. It is hoped you find group riding activities enjoyable and friendships are developed from this activity. This reference material is designed to help make your transition to group riding safe and pleasurable. Please read the material completely and refer back to it from time to time as a refresher. Any questions you may have should be directed to your Road Captains. Ride safe & enjoy!

Listed here are the objectives hoped to be provided to you with this material:

- * Define consistent group riding techniques.
- * Provide basic information in group riding techniques to new and newly-active members.
- * Provide refresher information in group riding techniques to long-active members.
- * Provide basic information in dealing with emergency maneuvers within the group riding environment.

Signaling Directions

Prior to riding, check your bike's lights/signals - this needs to be done as a pre-ride inspection, ignition on. Items to check:

- * Foot Brake activation - lights the stop lamp.
- * Hand Brake activation - lights the stop lamp.
- * Left Turn Signal activation - lights (flashes) the front & rear left turn signal lamps.
- * Left Turn Signal cancellation - turns off (stops flashing) the front & rear left turn signal lamps.
- * Right Turn Signal activation - lights (flashes) the front & rear right turn signal lamps.
- * Right Turn Signal cancellation - turns off (stops flashing) the front & rear right turn signal lamps.
- * Tail Lamp - on.
- * Head Light Hi Beam selected - headlight on.
- * Head Light Lo Beam selected - headlight on.

Any problems found with your bike should be repaired prior to riding with the group. If a problem is discovered during a ride, it should be reported to the Road Captains. In any event, hand signals should be used in conjunction with your bike's signals.



Left Turn
(back view)



Right Turn
(back view)



Stop
(back view)

Illustrated above are the hand signals for left turn, right turn & stop. Note these signals are always given using the left hand.

Signaling Formations

Formation signals are used when the announced formation (at the riders' meeting before departure) must be changed due to changes in road conditions, hazards or traffic. Formation signals are not used when the group stops/starts normally while traveling in stagger formation, but switches to side-by-side for stops. Actual formation descriptions and their use are listed elsewhere in this document under the heading of Group Riding Formations.

Group Riding Techniques

Illustrated below are the hand signals for staggered, single file & side-by-side formations, along with overhead views of what these formations look like. Note these signals are always given using the left hand.



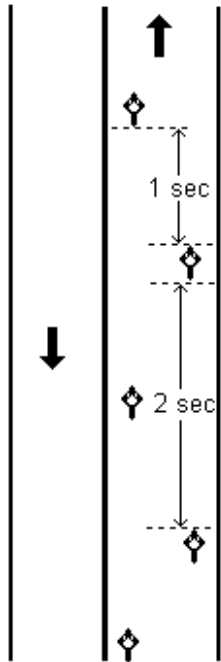
Staggered Formation
(back view)



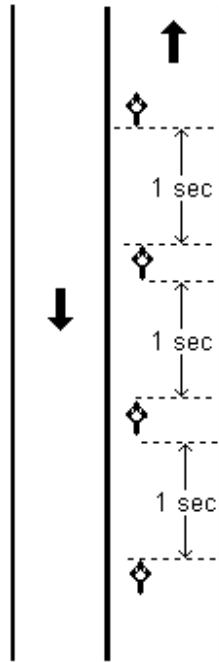
Single File Formation
(back view)



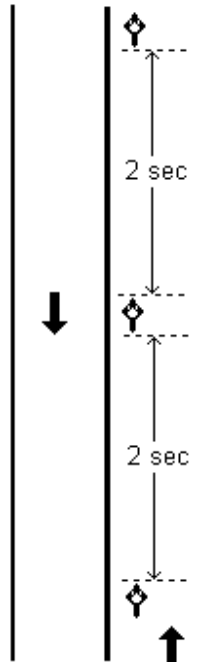
Side-by-Side Formation
(back view)



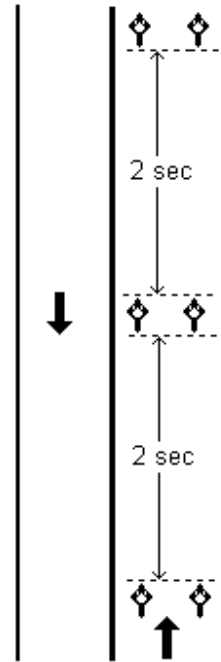
Staggered
(overhead view)



Temporary Single File
(overhead view)



Normal Single File
(overhead view)



Side-by-Side
(overhead view)

Signaling Hazards

Signals are used to warn the group of hazards that may be encountered. The hazard signals will be initiated by riders in the front of the group & relayed back through the group. Hazards that are signaled might include:

- * Potholes
- * Loose sand
- * Bicyclists
- * Pedestrians
- * People using lawn mowers next to the road

Signals are given by the rider using the left arm, regardless of which side of lane hazard is in; it is important to keep the right hand on the throttle. Signals given by the passenger using the left arm for left side of lane and the right arm for right side of lane. Left & right side of the lane, in this case, means to the left or to the bike of your bike.

Group Riding Techniques

Illustrated below are the hand signals to be used for signaling hazards:



(back view)

Rider & Passenger
Left-Side-of-Lane Hazard



(back view)

Rider
Right-Side-of-Lane Hazard



(back view)

Passenger

Signaling Situations

Signals are used to communicate some situations that may be encountered during group riding. Two of these that you need to be aware of are:

- * Low fuel (point at gas tank)
- * Comfort stop required (pat top of head with left hand)

These signals may originate anywhere within the group. They will need to be relayed to the Road Captains so they can take appropriate action. How the signals get relayed will depend upon whether the lead & tail Road Captains have radio communications available or not:

- * With radio communications available to the Road Captains, the group will relay the signal to the rear of the group and the Tail Road Captain will communicate the signal with the Lead Road Captain.
- * Without radio communications available to the Road Captains, the group will relay the signal to the front of the group to the Lead Road Captain.

The actual relay involves moving adjacent to the bike to receive the relayed signal, giving the signal, getting an acknowledgment the signal was received, then resuming your normal riding position with correct spacing.

Lane Change Signals

These hand signals are used for signaling to the Tail Road Captain that the Lead Road Captain wants to move the group either left or right to initiate or complete a pass. Note the sequence:

- * The signal is initiated by the Lead Road Captain
- * The signal is passed by the group to the rear Road Captain.
- * The Tail Road Captain will initiate the block of the requested lane when it is clear.
- * **The group remains in the initial lane.**
- * The Lead Road Captain moves the group when the lane has cleared.

If both the Road Captains have radios, then the request will be made by radio. When clear, the Tail Road Captain will initiate the requested lane block. See the section on *Passing* for additional information.

Group Riding Techniques

Illustrated below are the hand signals to be used for signaling *lane change requests* to the rear Road Captain:



Block Left
Lane
(rear view)

(closed fist)



Block Right
Lane
(rear view)

(thumb pointing right)

Stopping - Individual Technique

It is important to remember the front & rear brakes are not equal. The general characteristics for a motorcycle's brakes can be summarized as:

Front Brake:

- * More effective
- * Harder to lock up
- * Hand control has better feed-back, making control easier

If the front brake locks, it most likely results in a crash

Technique - if the front brake locks, release immediately

Rear brake:

- * Less effective
- * Easier to lock up
- * Foot control has less feed-back, making lock up more likely

If the rear brake locks, it may cause the back of the bike to come around; release will regain the tractive force of the rear tire, resulting in a "high side" crash

Technique - if the rear brake locks, keep it applied until you stop

Your brakes need to be used together. Road surface conditions will affect stopping abilities. Allow yourself more time interval (longer following distance) in poor traction conditions.

Stopping - Group Technique

Stopping safely and effectively while riding in a group requires everyone be attentive & aware at all times. Watch the traffic conditions ahead of and around the group. Watch for signals from the riders ahead of you. Maintain your time interval: the time interval remains the same until almost stopped, but as speed decreases, distance decreases.

Remember that stagger formations transition into side-by-side formations when stopping. Single file formations remain single file.

Be aware of the need to signal your intentions to other riders in the group. When stopped, remain alert, in gear & ready to move out with the group.

Group Riding Techniques

Starting- Straight at an Intersection

Starting from an intersection has two distinct situations; an intersection with a traffic light and an intersection with a stop sign. Each case requires its' own technique.

When stopped at an intersection with a traffic light, remain alert & in gear. When starting straight from an intersection with a traffic light, leave as a group, transition immediately into stagger formation (this is initiated by the lead road captain, working back through group sequentially). Establish your 2 second interval:

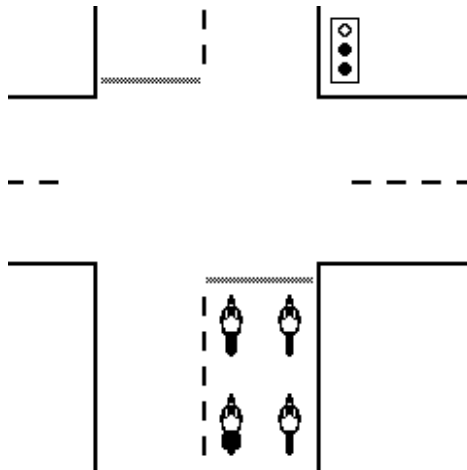
- * Pick out a fixed landmark. As the bike directly in front of you passes it,
- * Count "one thousand one, one thousand two"
- * You should not reach the fixed landmark until the end of this count sequence

Arriving early means your following distance is too close and you don't have enough reaction time.

Arriving late means your following distance is too far; group spacing becomes unmanageable, allowing other traffic to encroach on the group.

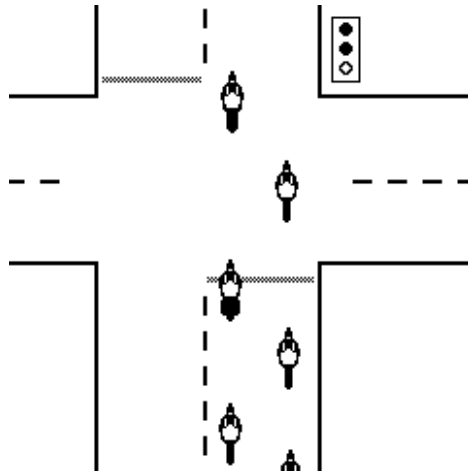
The Road Captain will maintain his speed at 5 MPH below limit until group reforms, then gradually move up to posted speed. Excess speed not required to close gap; traveling at the speed limit means you will be traveling 5 MPH faster than the group. Obey all traffic laws. If the lights changes to red before you get into the intersection, wait for the next cycle of the light.

The figures below illustrate the technique for a group starting straight from an intersection with a traffic light:



Stopped at Light
Remain In-Gear & Alert

Group Riding Techniques

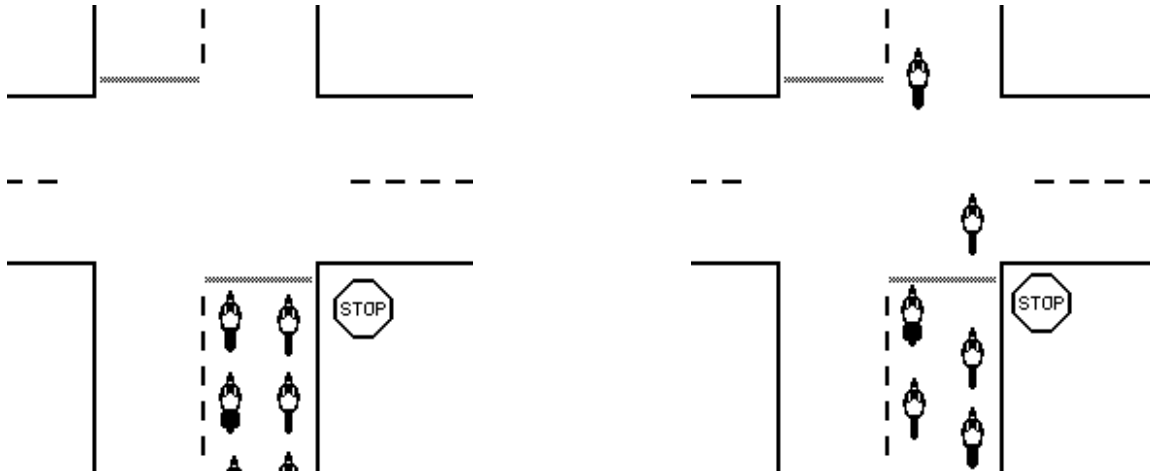


Leave as a Group,
Transition to Stagger Immediately
Establish 2 Second Interval to the Bike in Front of You
Lead Road Captain maintains Speed 5 MPH Under until Group Reforms (No Need to Speed)

When stopped at an intersection with a stop sign, remain alert & in gear. When starting straight from an intersection with a stop sign, leave individually. Stop before entering the intersection. Leave in stagger formation immediately from your stop; do not leave in side-by-side formation. Establish your 2 second interval. The Lead Road Captain will maintain the group's speed at 5 MPH below the speed limit until the group reforms, then gradually move the group speed up to the posted speed. Excess speed is not required to close gap; traveling at the speed limit means you will be traveling 5 MPH faster than the group.

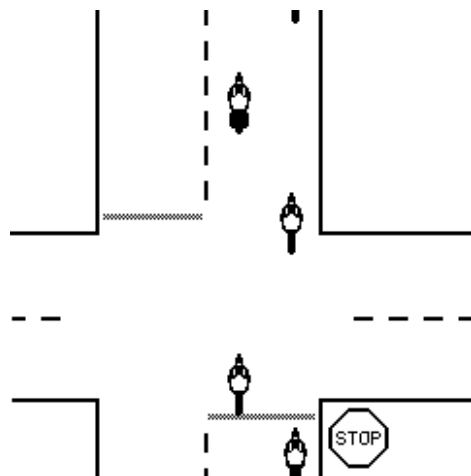
Group Riding Techniques

The figures below illustrate the technique for a group starting straight from an intersection with a stop sign:



Stopped at Stop
Sign Remain In-Gear & Alert

Leave Individually
Stop Before Entering Intersection



Establish 2 Second Interval
Lead Road Captain Maintains Speed 5 MPH Under
Until Group Reforms (No Need to Speed)

Group Riding Techniques

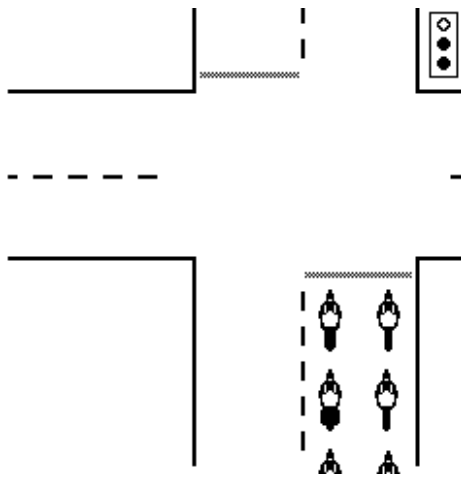
Starting - Left Turn at an Intersection

When starting from an intersection making a left turn, remain alert and in gear. Start individually; in stagger formation immediately from the intersection.. If the intersection has a stop sign, stop for the stop sign before entering the intersection. If the intersection has a traffic light, the group continues through the intersection as long as the light remains green. Establish your 2 second interval. Close up the group without speeding as described earlier.

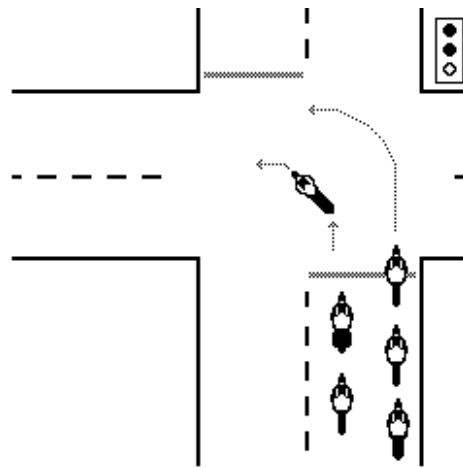
Each rider must remain in their established lane segment. Be aware that left turns accentuates the group's stagger:

- * Riders on left side of lane cover less distance, negotiate the corner at a lower rate of travel (for an equal length of time in intersection) or require less time to negotiate intersection.
- * Riders on right side of lane cover more distance, negotiate the corner at a higher rate of travel (for an equal length of time in intersection) or require more time to negotiate intersection.

The figures below illustrate the technique for a group starting a left turn from an intersection:

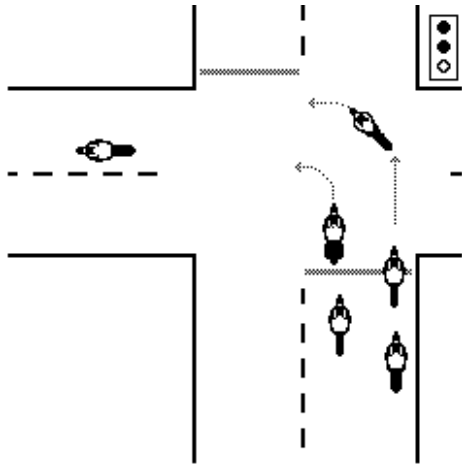


Left Turn at an Intersection
Remain Alert & In-Gear

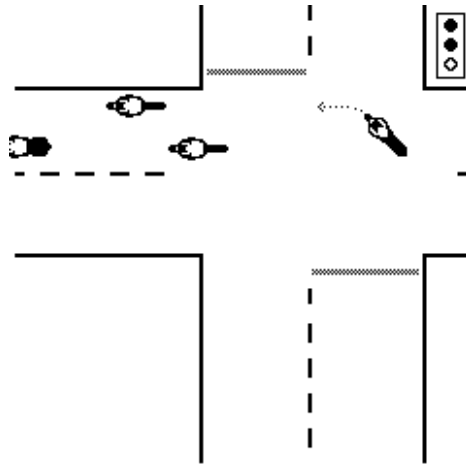


Leave Individually in Stagger Formation
Remain in Your Established Lane Segment
Left Turn Accentuates Stagger, (Riders on Left Cover
Less Distance, Require Less Time to Clear Intersection)

Group Riding Techniques



Riders on Right Cover More Distance
(Require More Time to Clear Intersection)



Establish 2 Second Interval to Bike in Front of You
Lead Road Captain Maintains Speed 5 MPH Under
Until Group Reforms (No Need to Speed)

Starting - Right Turn at an Intersection

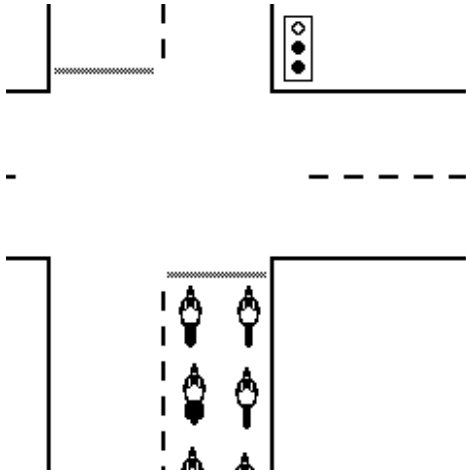
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Each rider must remain in their established lane segment. Be aware that right turns inhibit the group's stagger:

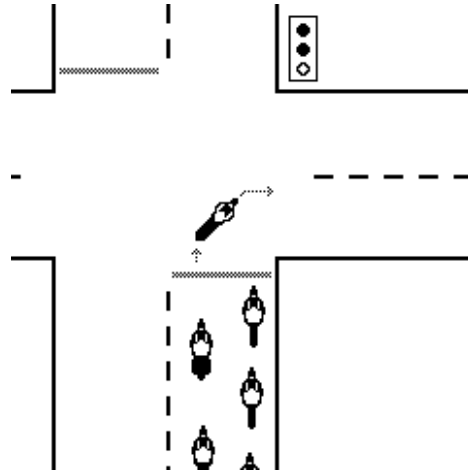
- * Riders on left side of lane cover more distance, negotiate the corner at a higher rate of travel (for an equal length of time in intersection) or require more time to negotiate intersection.
- * Riders on right side of lane cover less distance, negotiate the corner at a lower rate of travel (for an equal length of time in intersection) or require less time to negotiate intersection.

Group Riding Techniques

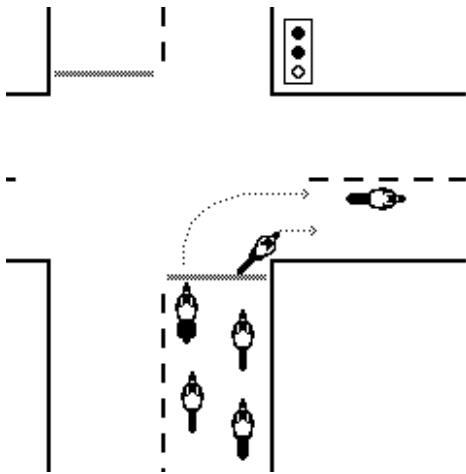
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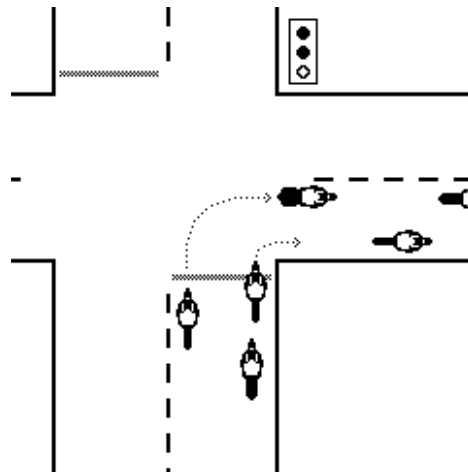
Right Turn at an Intersection
Remain Alert & In-Gear



Leave Individually in Stagger Formation
Remain in Your Established Lane Segment
Right Turn Inhibits Stagger (Riders on Right Cover Less Distance, Require Less Time to Clear Intersection)



Riders on Left Cover More Distance
(Require More Time to Clear Intersection)



Establish 2 Second Interval to Bike in Front of You
Lead Road Captain Maintains Speed 5 MPH Under
Until Group Reforms (No Need to Speed)

Group Riding Techniques

Starting - Rest Stop Parked in a Row

When stopped, take care of your personal business early. Be ready to go when the signal is given. Watch for Queues from the Road Captains:

- * If they're gearing up, so should you
- * If they're mounting up, so should you

If a riders' meeting is called before departure, pay attention and understand what's said. If you don't understand something, ask for clarification. The only dumb question is the one that's not asked.

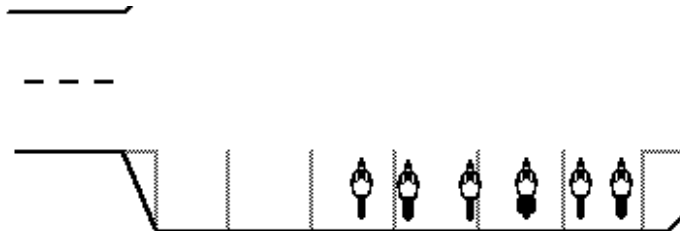
Notify the Road Captains of any special needs or equipment malfunctions, etc. If you must leave the group early, let the Road Captains know; they may wish to place you in a position within the group that will allow minimum disruption to the formation when you depart.

Stay alert. Monitor the Road Captains for Queues to prepare to ride. When the Road Captains are ready:

- * Lead Road Captain:
 - Instructs the group to mount up
 - Mounts up, starts his engine, pulls forward from his parking spot 1 to 2 feet
 - Waits for the group to all get ready to ride
- * Tail Road Captain:
 - Mounts up, starts his engine, pulls forward from parking spot 1 to 2 feet
 - Waits for the group to all get ready to ride
- * Group members:
 - Mount up, start their engines, pull forward from their parking spots 1 to 2 feet

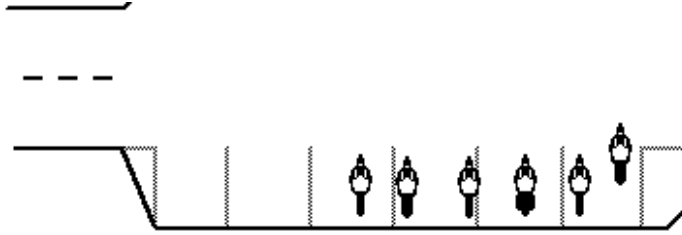
This signals the Road Captains the group is ready to ride. The Tail Road Captain informs the Lead Road Captain the group is ready to ride. The Lead Road Captain pulls out, maintains the group speed 5 MPH under limit. The group follows sequentially, establishes stagger and 2 second interval to the bike directly in front. The Tail Road Captain pulls out, informs the Lead Road Captain when the group is all out & formed up. The Lead Road Captain then increases the group's speed to speed limit.

The following sequence of figures illustrates the series of events to start the group from a rest stop when parked in a row:

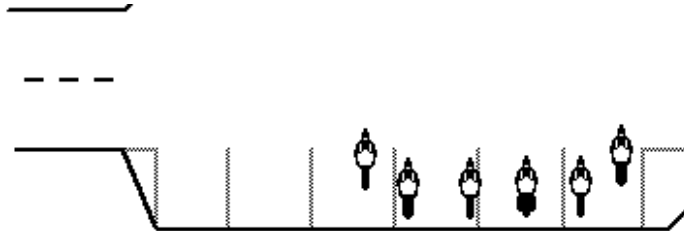


Road Captains gear-up & mount-up, Group gears-up, mounts-up

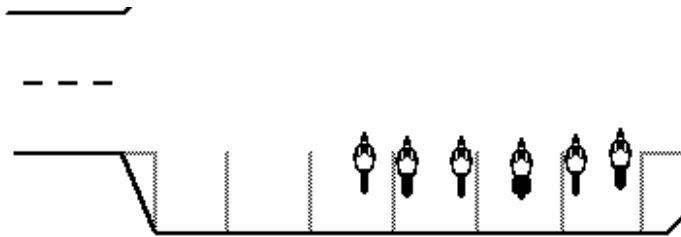
Group Riding Techniques



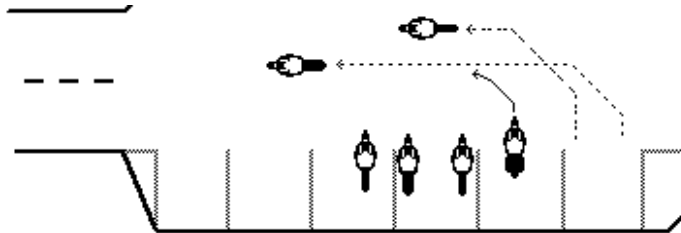
Lead Road Captain starts engine, pulls forward 1 to 2 feet, waits for group to get ready



Tail Road Captain starts engine, pulls forward 1 to 2 feet, waits for group to get ready



Group starts engines, pull forward 1 to 2 feet, signifying they are ready to ride, wait for all of group to get ready



Tail Road Captain signals Lead Road Captain group is ready to ride
Lead Road Captain pulls out, maintains speed 5 MPH under limit
Group pulls out sequentially, establishes stagger & 2 second interval
Tail Road Captain pulls out, signals Lead Road Captain when group has formed up
Lead Road Captain increases group speed to speed limit

Group Riding Techniques

Starting - Rest Stop Parked Randomly

When stopped, take care of your personal business early. Be ready to go when the signal is given. Watch for Queues from the Road Captains:

- * If they're gearing up, so should you
- * If they're mounting up, so should you

If a riders' meeting is called before departure, pay attention and understand what's said. If you don't understand something, ask for clarification. The only dumb question is the one that's not asked.

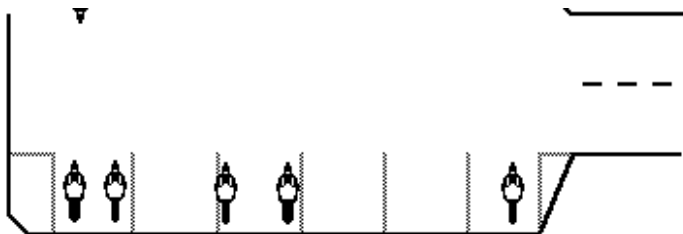
Notify the Road Captains of any special needs or equipment malfunctions, etc. If you must leave the group early, let the Road Captains know; they may wish to place you in a position within the group that will allow minimum disruption to the formation when you depart.

Stay alert. Monitor the Road Captains for Queues to prepare to ride. When the Road Captains are ready:

- * Lead Road Captain:
 - Instructs group to mount up
 - Mounts up, starts his engine
 - Pulls from parking spot to the front location where the group will form up
 - Waits for the group to all get ready to ride
- * Tail Road Captain:
 - Mounts up, starts his engine
 - Pulls forward from parking spot to the rear location where the group will form up
 - Waits for the group to all get ready to ride
- * Group members:
 - Mount up, start their engines,
 - Pull forward from parking spot & into side-by-side formation between the Lead & Tail Road Captains

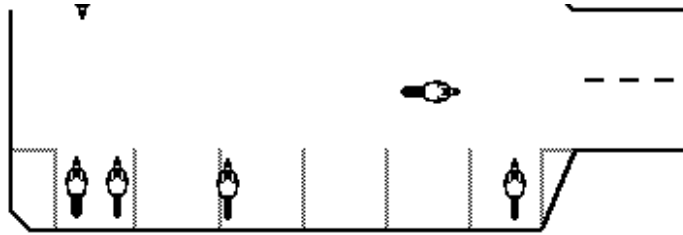
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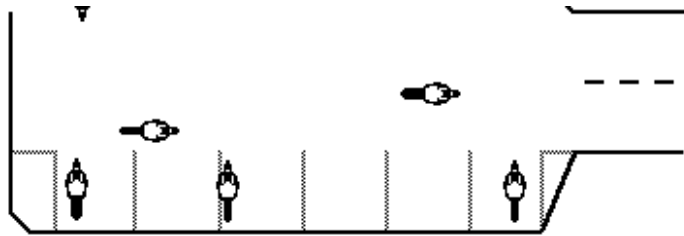


Road Captains gear-up & mount-up, Group gears-up, mounts-up

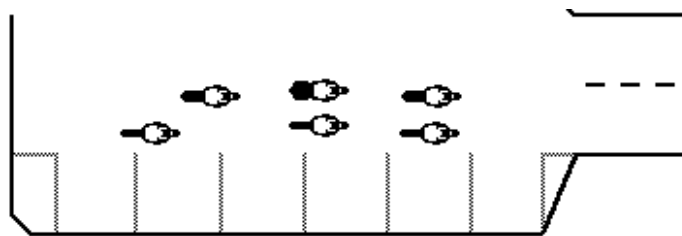
Group Riding Techniques



Lead Road Captain, starts engine,
pulls from parking spot to the front location where the group will form up

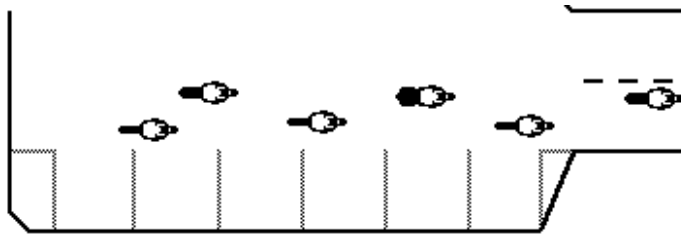


Tail Road Captain starts engine,
pulls from parking spot to the rear location where the group will form up



Group members start engines, pull from parking spots
& into side-by-side formation between the Lead & Tail Road Captains.

Group Riding Techniques



Tail Road Captain instructs Lead Road Captain group is ready to ride
Lead Road Captain pulls out, Group follows sequentially
Establish stagger formation, 2 second interval to bike directly in front

Group Riding Formations

Generally, we will use three formations. These formations are:

Staggered formation, defined as:

- * Two files of bikes
- * One second spacing to the closest (offset file) bike in front of you
- * Two second spacing to the bike directly in front (same file) of you

Single File formation has 2 types defined as:

- * Temporary Single File formation, defined as:
 - One file of bikes
 - Generally in the center to left side of the lane
 - One second spacing to the closest bike directly in front
- * Normal Single File formation, defined as:
 - One file of bikes
 - Generally in the center to left side of the lane
 - Two second spacing to the closest bike directly in front

Note - The difference between Temporary & Normal Single File Formations is the time interval used to determine spacing.

Side-by-Side formation, defined as:

- * Two files of bikes
- * Two second spacing to the closest bike directly in front of you
- * Two bikes abreast:
 - One bike on the left side of the lane
 - One bike on the right side of the lane

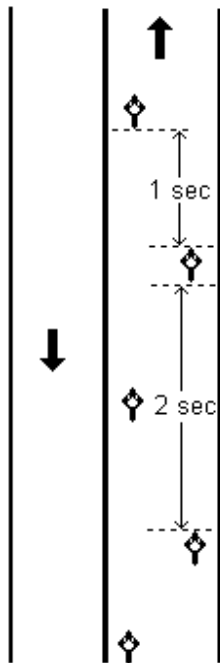
Note - Keep the adjacent bike within your peripheral vision.

Group Riding Techniques

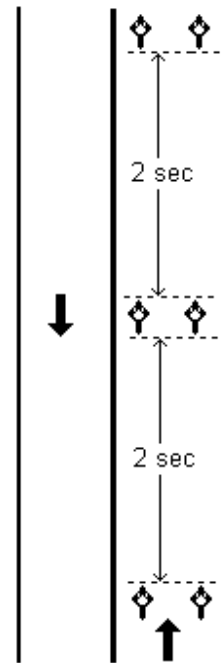
These formations are generally used as listed below, as determined by the Lead Road Captain (note: there may be exceptions):

- * Staggered formation will be used most of the time.
- * Single File formation will be used on narrow, twisty roads, when encountering (obviously long) road construction and similar long duration conditions (normal single file), or when encountering road hazards such as bicyclists, pedestrians, road maintenance equipment, (obviously short) road construction and similar short duration conditions (temporary single file) are present.
- * Side-by-Side (double file) formation may be used when in slow, heavy (city) traffic or in heavy traffic on an expressway to maintain group integrity, or at stops/starts to close the group up to navigate intersections quickly.

The figures below illustrate the various group riding formations and correct interval spacing:

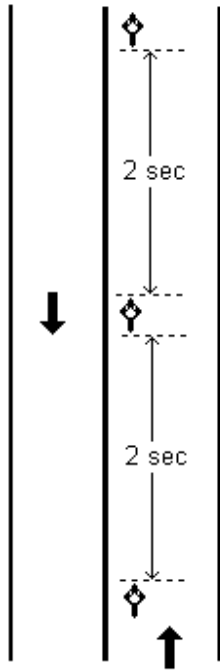


Staggered Formation
2 Second Spacing to Bike in Front

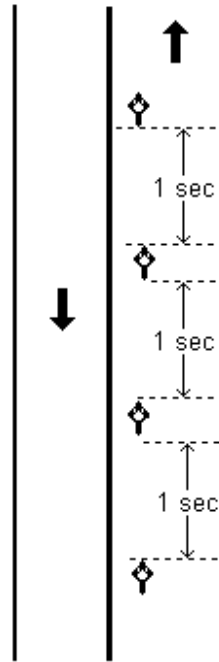


Side-by-Side Formation
2 Second Spacing to Bike in Front
Keep Adjacent Bike within Peripheral Vision

Group Riding Techniques



Normal Single File Formation
2 Second Spacing to Bike in Front
Used on Narrow, Twisty Roads
or (obvious) Long Construction Zones



Temporary Single File Formation
1 Second Spacing to Bike in Front
Used when Road Hazards are Present
or (obvious) Short Construction Zones

Rider Placement Within Group Riding Formations

Group riding places individual riders at greater risk. Managing this greater risk requires attention to placement of individual riders within the group. Riders are categorized to determine placement. The general categories of riders are:

- * Road Captains
- * Experienced group riders, defined as having one or more seasons of group riding experience
- * Inexperienced group riders, defined as having less than one season of group riding experience

Some general rules apply for placement of riders within the riding group. While each situation must be dealt with on an individual basis, the general rules are:

- * Road Captains:
 - In front (required),
 - In rear (required),
 - In middle (as available).
- * Experienced group riders ride near the back of group
- * Inexperienced group riders ride near the front of group

Group Riding Techniques

Listed below are reasons for individual rider placement within the group. The reasons are listed based on the general position within the group. An understanding of this information will lead to an understanding of the general rules for individual rider placement and the importance of following these guidelines.

- * Rear of the Group:

- Interval spacing is more difficult to maintain:

- Greater “rubber band” effect at the rear of the group

- Crossing intersections requires more individual responsibility:

- Signal lights may change before the entire group clears an intersection

- If split at a light:

- First bike in the split group acts as the lead road captain until the split group reforms with the main group

- More likely to be split from the group by other traffic:

- First bike in the split group acts as the lead road captain until the split group reforms with the main group

- * Front of the Group:

- Interval easier to maintain:

- Less “rubber band” effect at the front of the group

- Less likely to be split from the group by other traffic

- More easily monitored by the Lead Road Captain:

- Allows the Lead Road Captain to make adjustments based on the needs of the least experienced

riders

Some exceptions to these rider placement guidelines might include (but are not limited to):

- * When different placement is requested by a rider:

- All riders must be comfortable with their riding position within the group

- * When a rider makes arrangements with the Road Captains to leave the group early:

- Pre-planned single bike departures from the group cause less disruptions to the group if the departing bike is near the rear of the group.

- * When a rider develops equipment problems:

- Lighting/signaling equipment problems cause less discord for the group if the malfunctioning bike is near the rear (but ahead of the Rear Road Captain) of the group.

Passing

Passing when riding in a group is very different and much more difficult than passing when riding alone. On two lane roads, the Road Captains will initiate a pass only if impeded by traffic traveling at least 5 mph below the speed of the group. On multi-lane roads, the Road Captains will initiate a pass as dictated by traffic conditions. In all instances, the lead Road Captain decides when to pass.

The specific technique to be used for passing may vary from ride to ride. Actual passing technique to be used for a ride will be discussed at the riders’ meeting. Questions regarding passing technique should be raised at the riders’ meeting. The entire group needs to understand the technique to be used. Remember that **passing is always an individual responsibility**; individual riders must understand the impact of their actions upon the group.

Group Riding Techniques

The passing techniques we use can be defined in 4 basic categories. These techniques are:

- * Individual passing on a Two-lane road
- * Individual passing on a Multi-lane road
- * Group passing on a Two-lane road
- * Group passing on a Multi-lane road

The sequence for Individual Passing on a Two-lane road is:

Lead Road Captain

Looks for clear, safe passing zone

Signals to pass

Initiates pass

Returns to original lane after clear of passed vehicle

Maintains passing speed to allow room for the group to pass & clear passed vehicle

Next rider moves to passing position (left side of lane)

Looks for clear, safe passing zone

Signals to pass

Initiates pass

Returns to original lane after clear of passed vehicle

Maintains passing speed to allow room for the group to pass & clear passed vehicle

Repeat this process until the group has completed the pass

The sequence for Individual Passing on a Multi-lane road is the same as Individual Passing on a Two-lane road.

The sequence for Group Passing on a Two-lane road is the same as Individual Passing on Two-lane road except:

Lead Road Captain remains in passing lane for as long as there is a clear, safe passing zone for the group or until the group has completed its' pass, whichever is first.

The sequence for Individual Passing on a Multi-lane road is:

Lead Road Captain informs tail Road Captain by radio

Tail Road Captain

- * Blocks passing lane
- * Informs lead Road Captain of last vehicle approaching him from passing lane

Lead Road Captain

- * Waits for last vehicle in passing lane to go by
- * Signals lane change to group
- * Changes lane & initiates pass
- * Requests tail Road Captain to inform him when it's OK to change to previous lane
- * Stays in passing lane until

Tail Road Captain

- * Clears vehicle being passed
- * Changes lanes
- * Informs lead Road Captain group is clear of passed vehicle, OK to change back

Lead Road Captain

- * Signals lane change to group
- * Changes lane

Group follows signals & actions of the lead Road Captain

- * **Individual riders are still responsible for their own actions**

Group Riding Techniques

Parking the Group

Parking when riding with a group presents a set of challenges that are amplified compared to riding individually. To successfully resolve these challenges requires defining some specific objectives and assigning these objectives with an order of priority. These prioritized objectives are:

- * Priority One
Get the group out of traffic!
- * Priority Two
Get parked.
- * Priority Three
Dismount.

Priority One

Get the Group Out of Traffic!

When parking the group, many variables must be considered. Among these are where to park and what the implications are when choosing a parking location:

- * Street parking:
 - Main street parking considerations:
 - Traffic volume - if it's too heavy, look elsewhere
 - Traffic speed - if it's too fast, look elsewhere
 - Street width - if it's too narrow, look elsewhere
 - Parking space availability:
 - Is there enough parking spaces available for the group?
 - Side street parking considerations:
 - Less traffic - if it's too heavy, look elsewhere
 - Group must be able to get off the main street first:
 - If the group can't, look elsewhere
 - Park only after the group is off main street
 - Parking space availability:
 - Is there enough parking spaces available for the group?
- * Parking lot parking:
 - Get the group out of traffic!
 - Parking lot size
 - Traffic flow pattern in parking lot
 - Parking space availability:
 - Is there enough parking spaces available for the group?

Group Riding Techniques

In all instances, suitable parking for the group must:

- * Get the group out of traffic!
- * Provide firm & reasonably level ground to park
- * Provide adequate space to park & dismount.

Parking Guidelines

Some general guidelines to follow for group parking:

- * **Get the group out of traffic!**
- * Parallel park all bikes facing same direction
- * Passengers remain seated until signaled OK to dismount by rider
- * Riders remain alert & aware of adjacent bikes
- * In a parking lot:
 - Riders signal passengers OK to dismount **only after:**
 - The bike in front (now adjacent) has backed into its' parking spot & its' passenger has dismounted
 - The rider has stopped his bike & has firm footing to keep bike upright
 - The bike behind (now adjacent on other side) has completely stopped
 - Then** the passenger dismounts & immediately moves out of the way
 - The rider then backs his bike into its' parking spot

Note - When parking in a parking lot, passengers will dismount *before* the rider has parked his bike.

- * When Street Parking:
 - Riders signal passengers OK to dismount **only after:**
 - The bike in front (now adjacent) has backed into its' parking spot & its' passenger has dismounted
 - The rider has:
 - Backed his bike into its' parking spot
 - Stopped the bike & has firm footing to keep bike upright
 - The bike behind (now adjacent on other side) has backed into its' parking spot & has completely stopped
 - Then** the passenger dismounts & immediately moves out of the way

Note - When parking on the street, passengers will dismount only *after* the rider has parked his bike.

Exceptions to these General Guidelines:

- * Anytime safety is an issue, do what is required for your safety & the group's safety
- * When terrain makes parking with a passenger impractical

Group Riding Techniques

Group Parking Procedures - Street Parking

The Lead Road Captain will:

- * Signal the parking area to the group
- * Move to farthest spot available
- * Line up to back in
- * Wait for the next bike to pull alongside
- * Then back into his parking spot

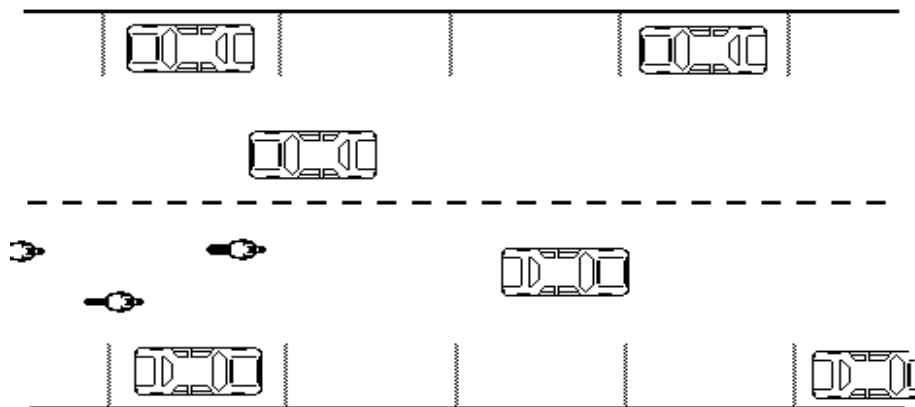
Members of the Group will:

- * Observe the Lead Road Captain's signal to park
- * Relay the signal to park back through the group
- * Move into Temporary Single File (right side of lane)
- * File into the parking area, immediately pulling up alongside bike in front
- * Wait for the next bike to pull alongside
- * Then back into their parking spot

Passengers should:

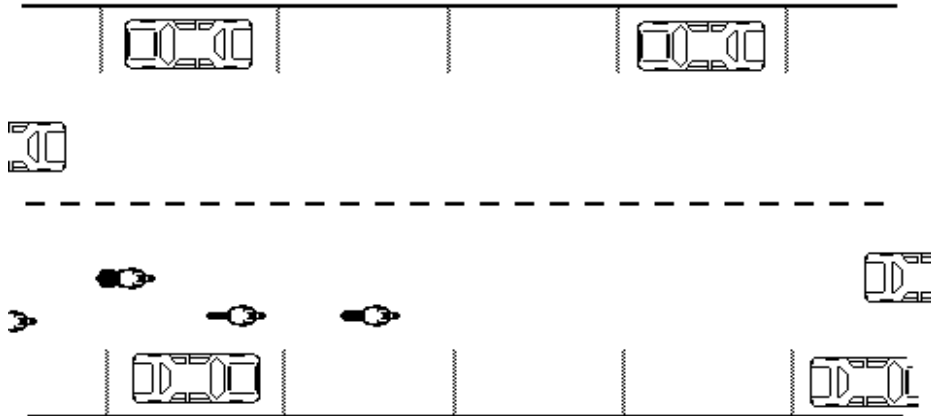
- * Remain seated on the bike until the bike is in its' parking spot
- * Remain seated until the rider has indicated OK to dismount

The following series of diagrams illustrates the sequence for group parking procedures on the street:

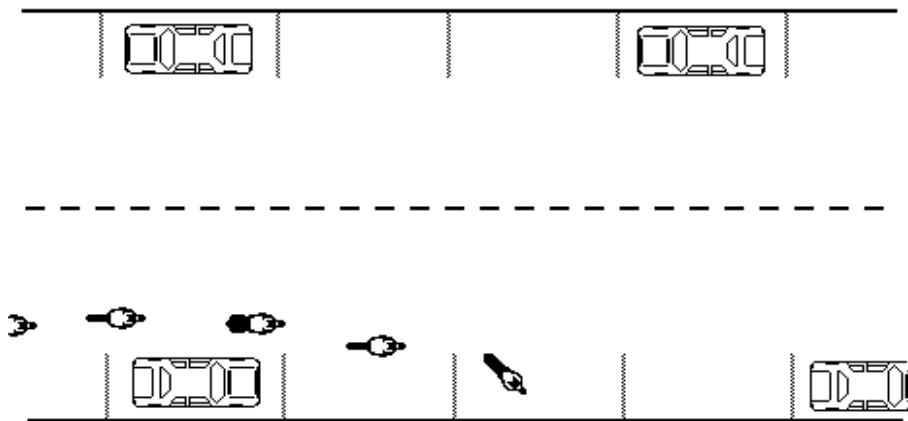


Lead Road Captain Signals to Park

Group Riding Techniques

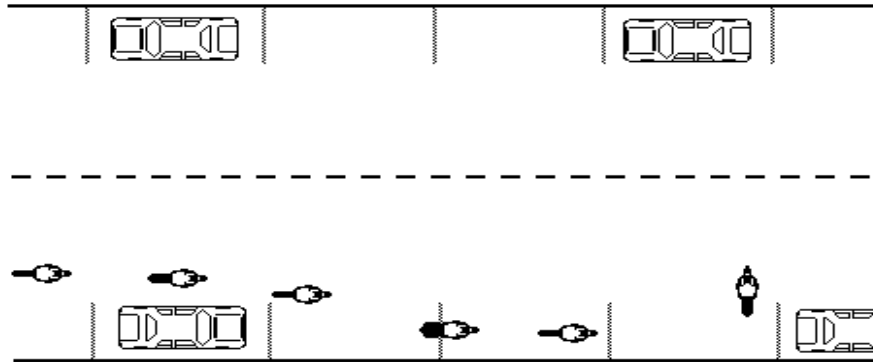


Relay Signal to Park back through Group
Move to Temporary Single File (Right Side of Lane)

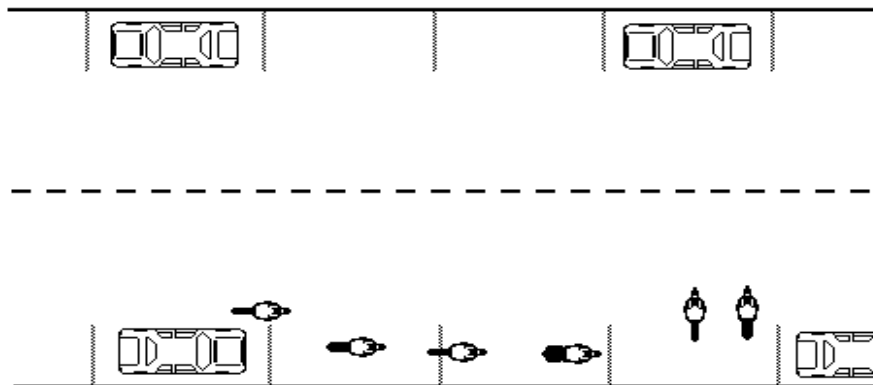


Road Captain Moves to Farthest Spot Available
Group Follows Single File, Staying to Right of Traffic Lane

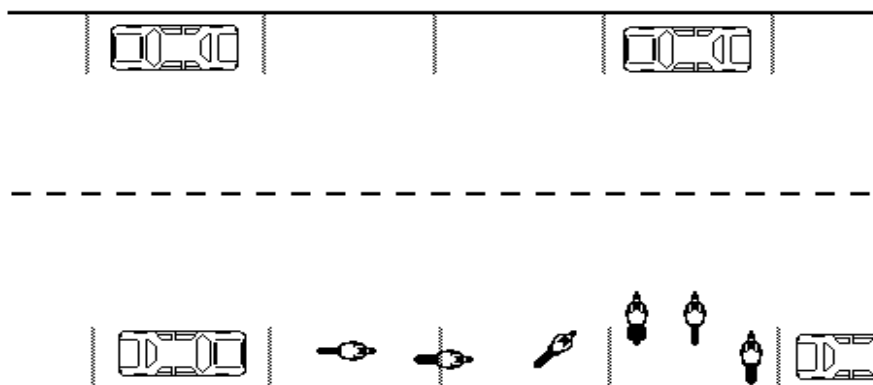
Group Riding Techniques



Road Captain Lines Up to Back In, Waits for 2nd Bike to Pull Along Side
Group Follows Single File, Moves Out of Traffic as Quickly as Possible

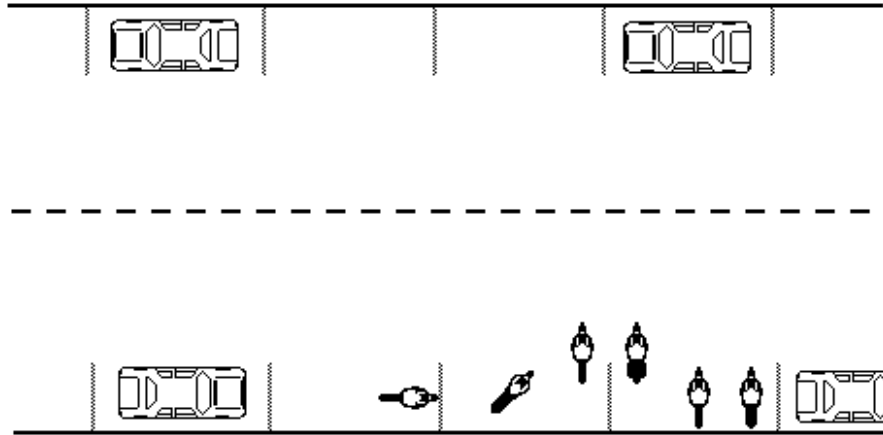


2nd Bike Pulls Up Along Side, Waits for 3rd Bike to Pull Up Along Side
Lead Road Captain Begins Backing Into Parking Spot
Group Continues Moving Single File, Getting Out of Traffic as Quickly as Possible



Lead Road Captain is Parked, Waits for 2nd Bike to Park Alongside
3rd Bike Pulls Along Side 2nd Bike, Waits for 4th Bike to Pull Up Along Side
2nd Bike Begins Backing Into Parking Spot
Group Continues Moving Single File, Getting Out of Traffic as Quickly as Possible

Group Riding Techniques



- 2nd Bike is Parked Alongside, Lead Road Captain Dismounts (or Signals Passenger to Dismount)
- 2nd Bike Waits for 3rd Bike to Park Alongside
- 4th Bike Pulls Along Side 3rd Bike, Waits for 5th Bike to Pull Up Along Side
- 3rd Bike Begins Backing Into Parking Spot
- Group Continues Moving Single File, Getting Out of Traffic as Quickly as Possible

Movement is Continuous & Fluid
Actions are Sequential, Each Bike Following the Lead of the Bike in Front
Front Bikes in Group Move Quickly, Keeping Group Moving

Priority One
Get the Group Out of Traffic!

Group Riding Techniques

Group Parking Procedures - Parking Lot Parking

The Lead Road Captain will:

- * Signal the parking lot to the group
- * Lead the group into parking lot
- * Keep moving towards the far end of parking lot until the entire group has exited the street & entered the parking lot
- * Circle back towards the front of lot if required to get the entire group off the street
- * Move to farthest spot available
- * Line up to back in
- * Wait for the next bike to pull alongside
- * Then signal his passenger OK to dismount
- * Wait for his passenger to dismount & immediately move out of the way
- * Wait for the next bike's passenger to dismount & immediately move out of the way
- * Then back into his parking spot
- * Wait for the next bike to park alongside
- * Then dismount

Members of the Group will:

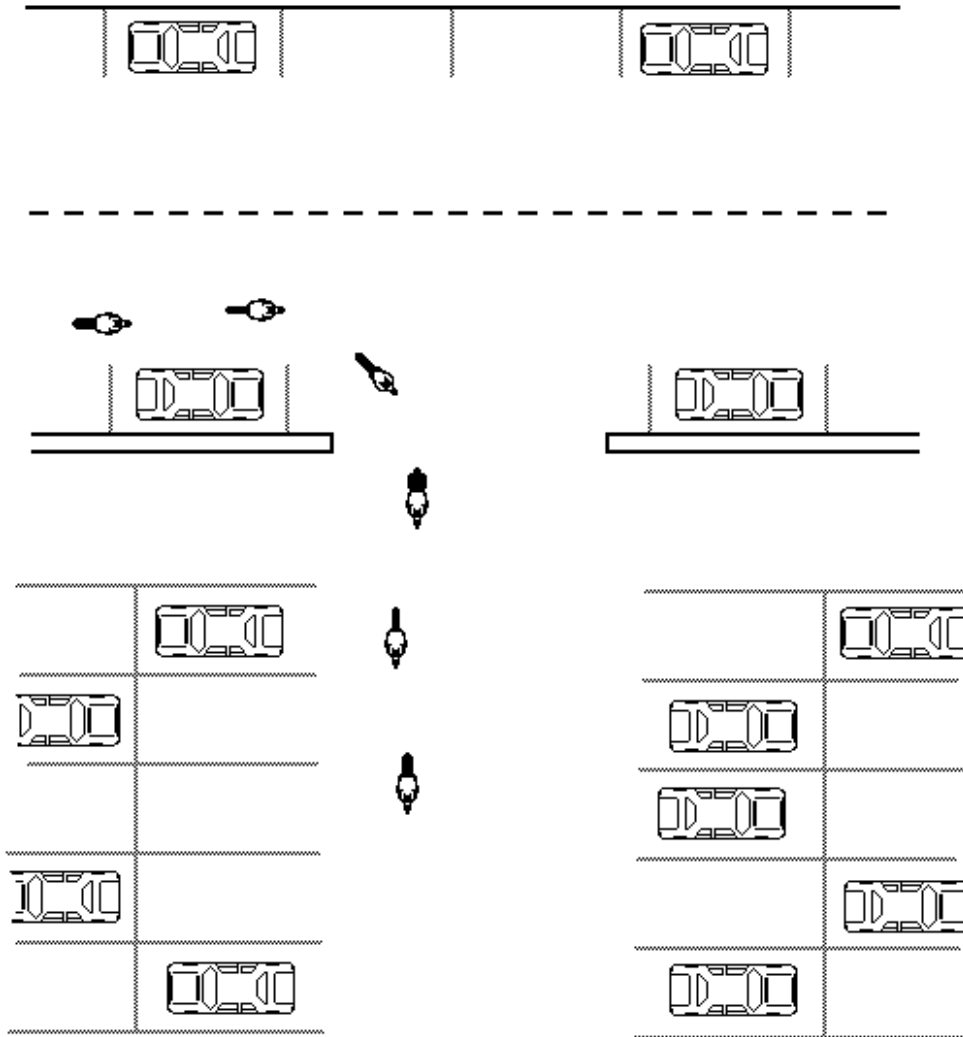
- * Observe the Lead Road Captain's signal to enter parking lot
- * Relay the signal back through the group
- * Follow the Lead Road Captain into parking lot towards the far end of parking lot until the entire group has exited the street & entered the parking lot
- * Immediately pull in adjacent to the bike in front
- * Wait for the next bike to park alongside and the previous bike's passenger to dismount
- * Wait for the bike behind (now adjacent on the other side) to pull alongside and stop
- * Then signal their passenger OK to dismount
- * Wait for his passenger to dismount & immediately move out of the way
- * Wait for the next bike's passenger to dismount & immediately move out of the way
- * Then back into parking spot
- * Wait for the previous bike's rider to dismount
- * Wait for the next bike to park alongside
- * Then dismount

Passengers should:

- * Remain seated until the rider has indicated OK to dismount

Group Riding Techniques

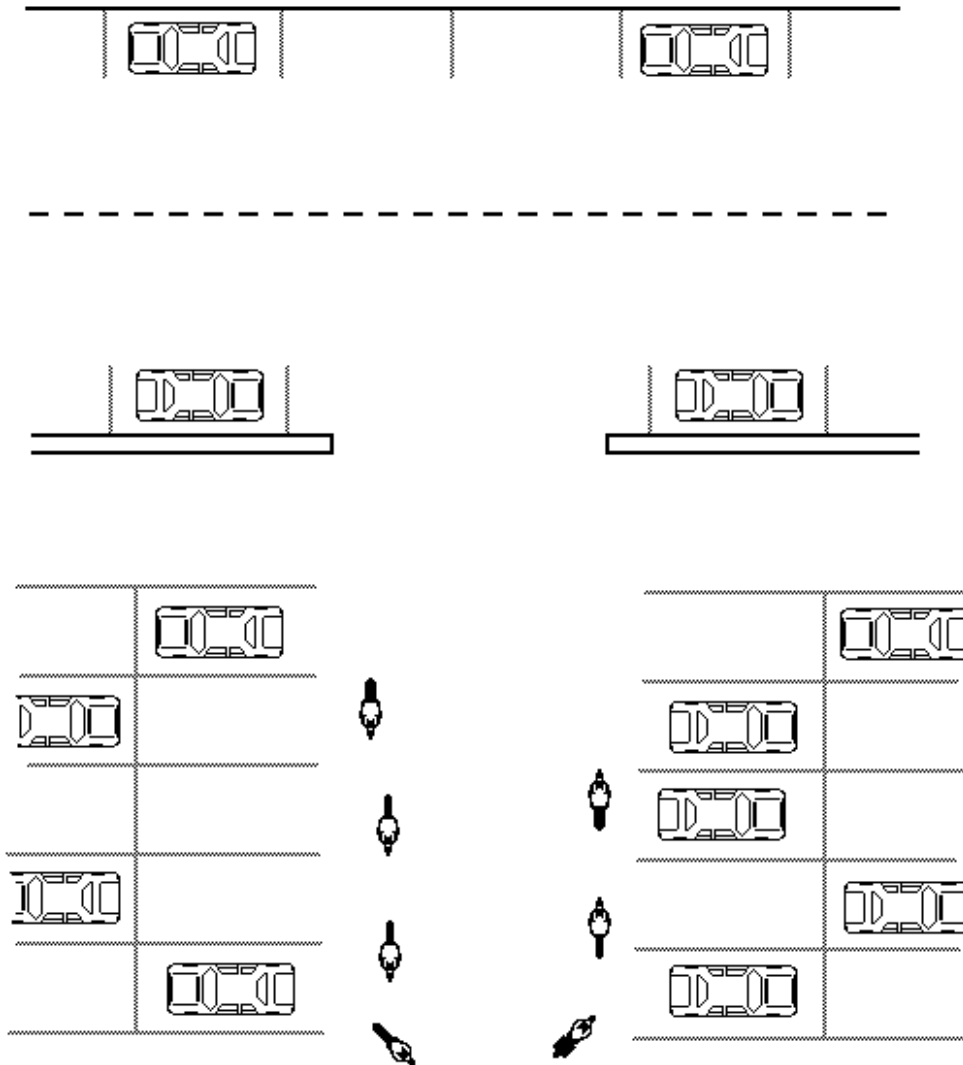
The following series of diagrams illustrates the sequence for group parking procedures on the street:



Lead Road Captain Moves Group Out of Street, Into Parking Lot, Moving to Far End of Lot

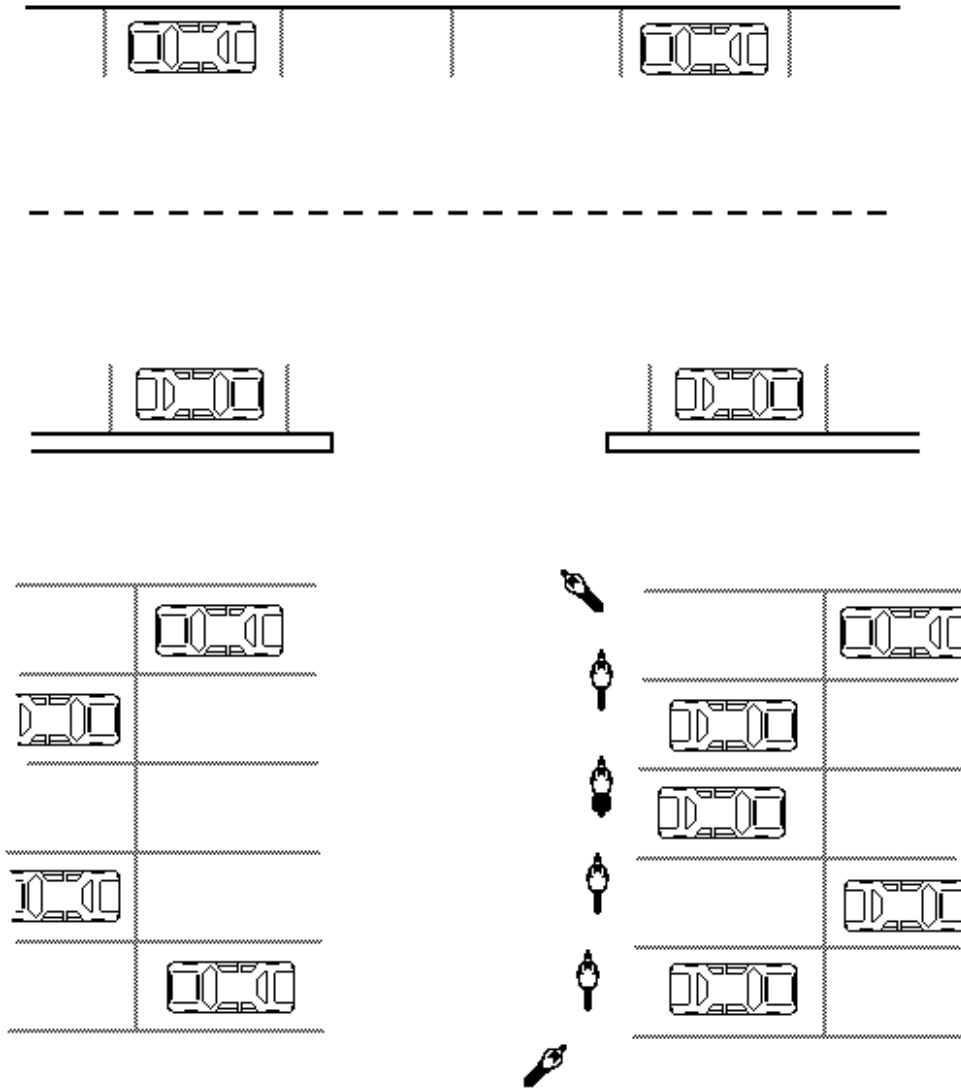
Priority One
Get the Group Out of Traffic!

Group Riding Techniques



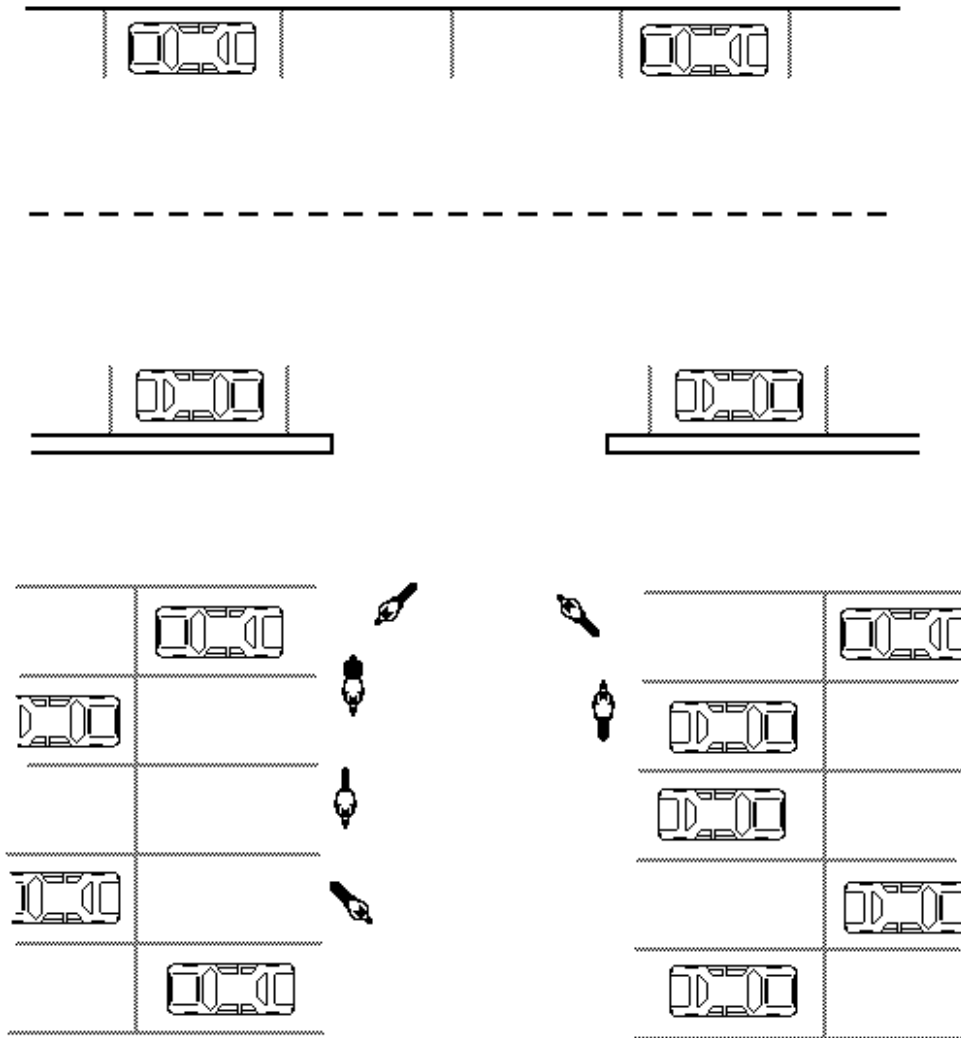
Road Captain Circles Back, Verifying Group is Out of Street
Group Follows Path of Road Captain, Keeping Moving to Get Group Out of Street

Group Riding Techniques



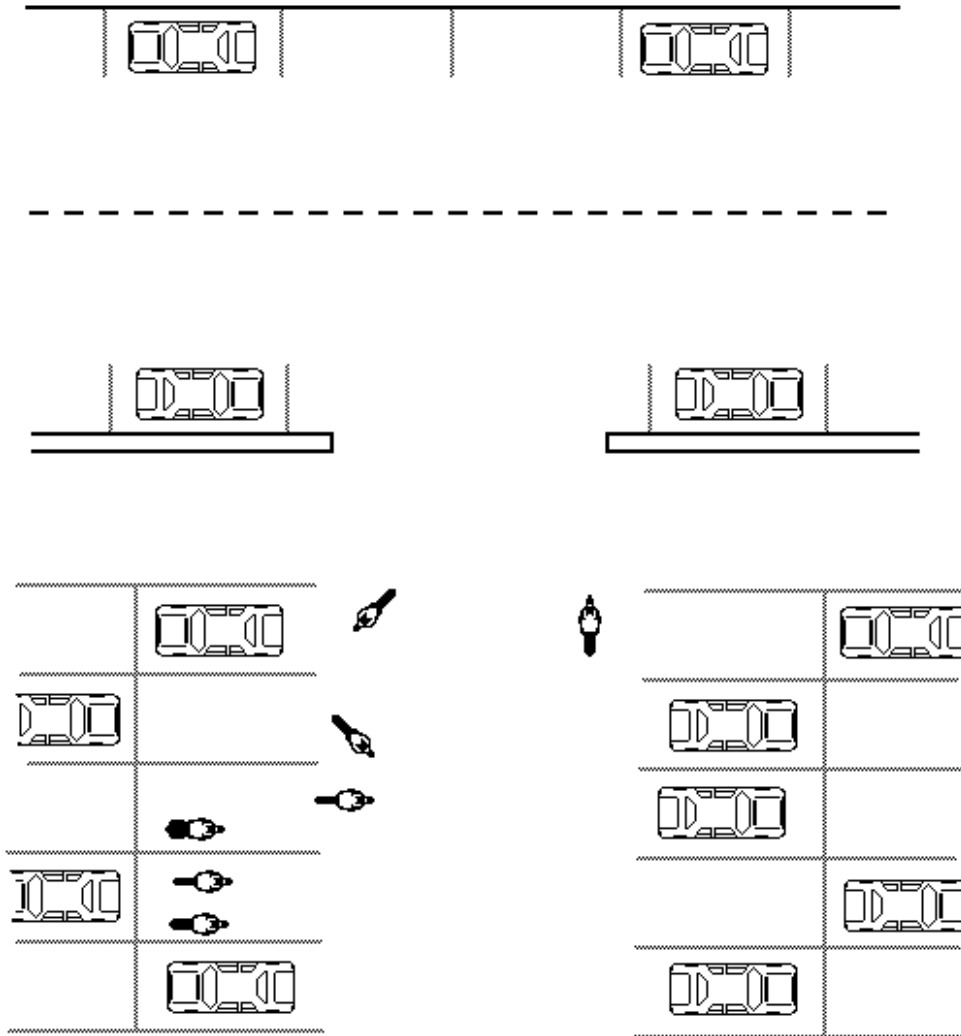
Road Captain Determines Parking Available, Maneuvers Group into Position to Park
Group Follows Road Captain Into Position

Group Riding Techniques



Road Captain Moves to Farthest Spot Available, Lines Up to Back In, Waits for 2nd Bike to Pull Along Side
Group Follows Single File, Begins Parking in Sequence

Group Riding Techniques



Group Continues Parking in Sequence
Movement is Continuous & Fluid

Avoid Blocking Other Traffic in Parking Lot

Group Riding Techniques

Leaving the Group - Planned Departure

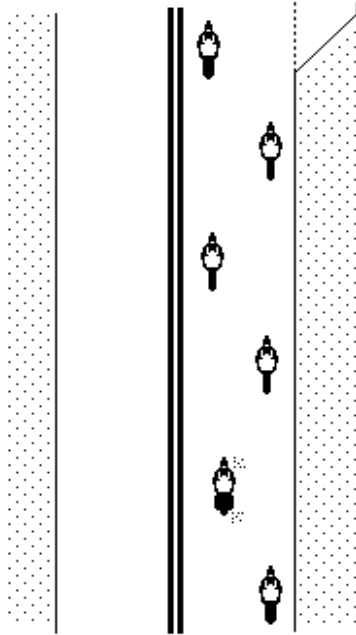
If you plan to leave the group, communicate your intentions with the Road Captains at the earliest opportunity. Know the route, know where you will be leaving the group, and make sure the Road Captains know where you want to leave the group. This is important because the Road Captains are responsible for the group. If you leave the group without letting them know the Tail Road Captain will leave the group with you. The group will no longer have a Tail Road Captain and the group will wait for you at the next stop, delaying the group's travel schedule. Without notification through the Road Captains, other riders around you may not expect your departure; unexpected actions/reactions can disrupt the group, creating a high-risk situation.

When you inform the Road Captains, they will inform the group of your planned departure from the group and place you near the rear of the group where your departure will have minimum impact on the group. Your actions will be expected and group reactions will be minimized.

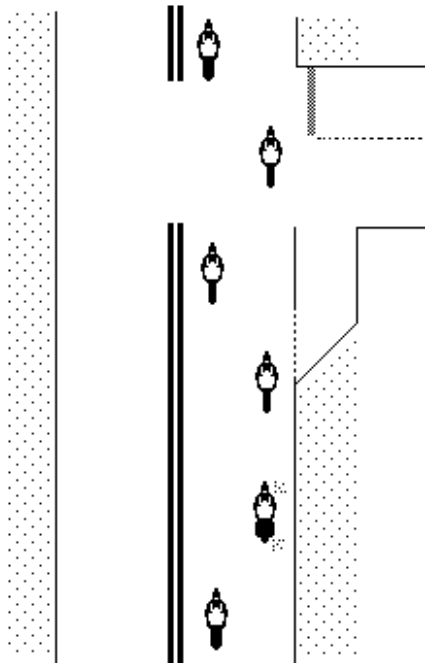
The sequence for actual departure from group should follow this pattern:

- * Departing rider signals intentions to depart group:
 - Left or right turn signal, as appropriate:
 - Lets other riders know you plan to change speed and/or direction
- * Departing rider makes eye contact with the rider behind him/her before changing speed and/or direction:
 - Avoids confusion & adverse reactions
- * The rider behind departing the departing rider acknowledges eye contact, nods yes
- * Departing rider leaves the group:
 - Make sure when departing the group you really leave; avoid leaving early & then "hanging" with the group:
 - Prevents confusing the group and the Road Captains
 - Allows other traffic to flow normally
- * Departing rider waves OK to the Tail Road Captain upon departure:
 - This lets the Road Captain know everything's as planned
- * Tail Road Captain:
 - Acknowledges departing rider waving OK:
 - Nods yes
 - Stays with the group

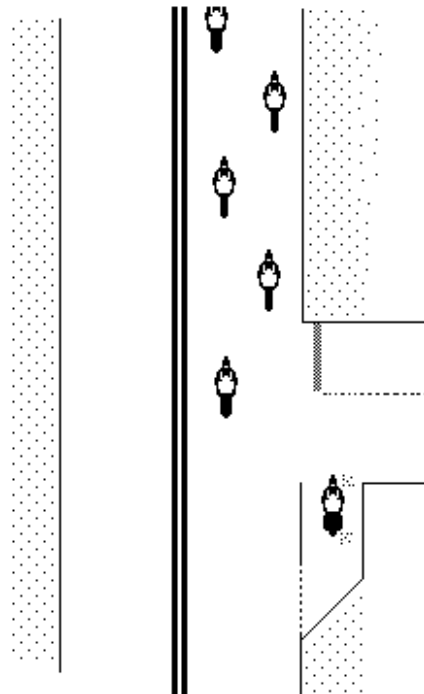
Group Riding Techniques



Departing Rider Informed Road Captains of Planned Departure at Rider Meeting
 Road Captains Placed Departing Rider Near Rear of Group
 Departing Rider Signals Departure, Makes Eye Contact with Rider Behind



Tail Road Captain Acknowledges Signal,
 Moves Over to Left of Lane
 Departing Rider Changes Speed, Direction,
 Begins Departure from the Group



Departing Rider Waves OK to Tail Road Captain
 Tail Road Captain Acknowledges Departing Rider's Wave OK
 Tail Road Captain Stays with the Group

Group Riding Techniques

Leaving the Group - Emergency Departure

Despite our best efforts to plan every detail of a group ride, sometimes circumstances arise that result in a rider needing to drop from the group unexpectedly. These are generally categorized as emergencies. Emergencies are not planned events. They are events that can be anticipated through proper mental preparation. Some general guidelines that can help with your mental preparation are:

- * Every rider in the group must understand the responsibilities of group riding
- * Every rider in the group must be responsible for their actions
- * Every rider in the group must be aware of how their actions impact the rest of the group

Should you find yourself in a situation that requires an emergency departure from the group, the following sequence of events forms a basic set of guidelines. You should go over this sequence thoroughly and often. Mental preparation now may prevent road rash later.

Emergency departure sequence:

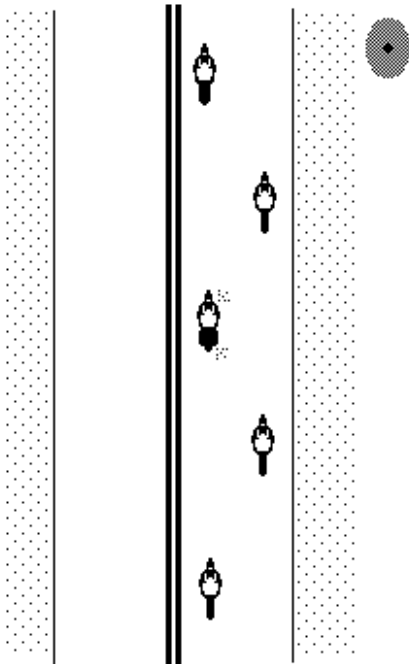
- * The member of the group with the emergency:
 - Signals intentions to change speed & direction (if possible)
 - Makes eye contact with the rider behind him (if possible)
 - Changes speed & direction:
 - Move to the far right side of the lane
 - Make sure the bike behind you can get around you
 - Slow down
 - Move to shoulder of road
- * Group members behind the rider with the emergency:
 - Observe the signals given by the rider with the emergency
 - Acknowledge eye contact (nod yes)
 - Allow the rider with the emergency to move to the right side of the lane
 - Signal others riders behind you that you will be moving to the left side of the lane:
 - Signal single file formation
 - Make eye contact if possible
 - Move to left side of lane
 - After clear of the rider with the emergency:
 - Signal stagger formation
 - Resume stagger formation
 - Continue with the group

Note - continuing with the group is very important & generally the single most difficult event in this sequence

- * Tail Road Captain:
 - Drops from group formation
 - Stays with the rider with the emergency
 - Communicates situation to the Lead Road Captain (if radio communication available)

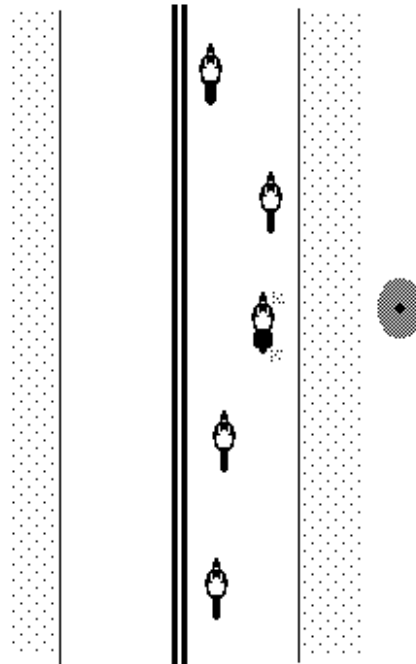
Group Riding Techniques

The series of figures below represent this procedure:



Rider Making Emergency Departure Signals,
Makes Eye Contact with Rider Behind

Rider Behind Acknowledges Signal,
Signals Single File Formation

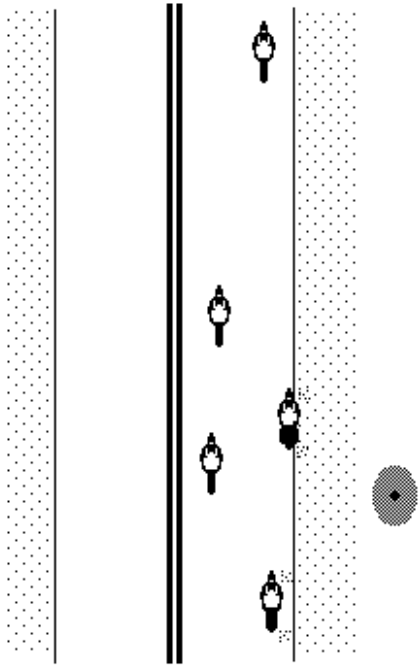


Rider Making Emergency Departure
Changes Speed, Direction, Begins Departure

Rider Behind Moves to Left,
Giving Departing Rider Room to Slow

Group Behind Moves to Single File Formation,
Left Side of Lane

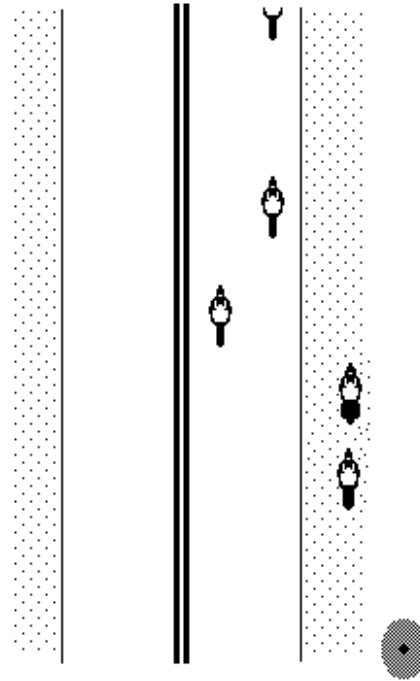
Group Riding Techniques



Rider Making Emergency Departure
Reduces Speed, Moves to Shoulder

Group Continues

Road Captain Signals,
Changes Speed, Direction,
Begins Departure from Group



Rider Making Emergency Departure
Moves to Shoulder When Speed Low Enough
to do so Safely

Group Resumes Stagger Formation
after Clear of Departing Rider

Road Captain Stays with Rider with Emergency

Group Riding Techniques

Leaving the Group - Filling the Gap

When a rider departs from the middle of the group, a gap will be left where that rider was. There are two methods of dealing with this; either continue on with the gap in the formation, or adjust the formation to fill in the gap. If the gap is left open then:

- * All remaining group riders remain in their respective positions
- * Two riders will end up without a stagger bike between them, both on the same side of the lane
These riders will still maintain 2 second spacing

If the gap is to be filled, the following procedure is to be used. Note that this procedure has each rider staying in the same side of the lane that he was in originally (prior to the departure of the rider with the emergency). You should **not** change the side of the lane you are riding in.

When filling in the gap, the sequence of events for this procedure are:

- * The rider directly behind gap (opposite side of lane):
 - Establishes eye contact with the rider behind (opposite side of lane, directly behind gap to be filled)
 - Signals the rider behind to pass & fill the gap
 - Allows the rider behind to pass
 - Maintains 2 second interval spacing (to rider directly in front)
- * The rider directly behind gap (same side of lane):
 - Waits for signal from rider in the stagger lane to signal to pass & fill the gap
 - Acknowledges the signal to pass & fill the gap (nods yes)
 - Passes the rider in front (opposite side of lane)
 - Fills the gap
 - Establishes 2 second interval spacing (to rider directly in front)

This procedure will be repeated sequentially back through the group to fill each subsequent gap made from the previous rider's pass & fill the gap maneuver.